

Punch

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The best part of the holidays



Union-Castle have a lot of time for young people, and a lot of room on deck, to let them work off one big meal and work up an appetite for the next. It's a family affair between England and Africa... long leaves start on board, and end on board... five or six relaxed weeks all told, perhaps, of all-in, all-found, good living, for the price of the travel tickets alone. For the very young there are nannies and nurseries and supervised meals with grown-up loved ones away on deck (To Parents — Union-Castle

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Subscriptions

If you wish to have *Punch* sent to your home each week, send £2 16. 0d.* to the Publisher, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

For overseas rates see page 502. Postage of this issue: Gt. Britain and Eire 4d.; Canada 1½d. Elsewhere Overseas 4½d.† Mark Wrapper top left-hand corner **Canadian Magazine Post††Printed Paper—Reduced Rate.

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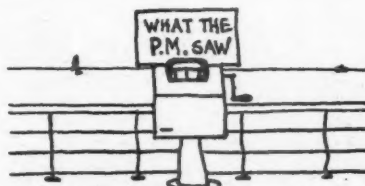
Q

The London Charivari

POLITICAL slogans trip better from American lips than from ours. "Who else but Nelse?" the rallying-call for Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, a possible Republican presidential candidate, could never be challenged by any such lame English equivalents as "He's no villain, trust Macmillan" or "Well apparelled, he's our Harold." Gaitskell, seldom hailed as Hugh, needs something like a ten-syllable build-up for a rough and ready rhyme to his surname—"Who has grit as well as very great skill?"—and although you may catch votes with heroics you can't with heroic couplets. The last word on these election tactics was spoken in a pre-war American play in which a candidate stands or falls by the forthright tocsin "A vote for Jackson means a vote for Jackson."

Never Have so Many...

THERE is nothing much to deduce from the report that the Royal Academy attendances for the Churchill exhibition have beaten the previous record



held by a Leonardo da Vinci show—except, perhaps, that you can prove anything with statistics.

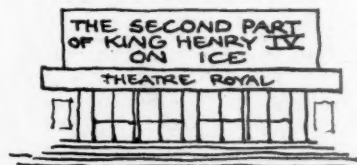
Summer Time

THE football season has been extended this year to May 9, one week after the Cup Final and one week

deeper into the cricket season. There are now only two months of the year in which the willow (with tennis, racing, athletics, and so on) holds undisputed sway, and there is already talk of a summer soccer competition to kill the unforgiving minutes. Many people will regard this latest mauling of the cricket season with horror, but others will see in it new evidence of the professional game's decadence and the need for fireworks at Lord's. The majority, however, will merely mourn the passing of another bit of English summer. After all, cricket does mean cream flannels, come rain or shine.

Stranger than Fiction

ONE thing is clear from the reports that *Pride and Prejudice* has been turned into



a musical for Broadway: we shall all have to be more careful with our jokes about what they're next going to turn into a musical for Broadway.

Repository

LONDON Transport recently complained that in a number of garages their bus cleaners had been found to be not at work. "It is impossible to say that they were asleep," said the maintenance chief, "but let us say they were in repose." It makes a soothing picture. There, in those echoing sheds that loom like hangars in the windy suburbs, the great red monsters stand in rows,



"I had been thinking in terms of you and me and an electioneering Budget."

their radiators no longer a-tremble. They seem to yawn and stretch after a hard day's pounding. The tyres have slithered to a stop, and no bells ring. And there, dusters and mops in hand, the brawny cleaners sprawl a-top the roofs, or hang half-waking from the straps inside: dreaming, they stroke the diesel's shiny flank, or trace an arrowed heart in dust upon a window. They croon the strange, romantic place-names as they idly wind the indicator handles: Royal Oak, East Ham, South Mimms, Addiscombe, Poplar... Ah, the call of far-off places, the vivid sights and sounds that fill the mind! Who could resist five minutes' poetical reflection in such evocative surroundings, in the middle of the night? And how cruel of L.T. to label it repose!

Withdraw!

"NOW that Mao Tse-tung has behaved like Dr. Fu Manchu..." These bitter words, from the pen of a *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, will be deeply resented by all admirers of the great Doctor. Fu Manchu had his faults, but he never behaved in any way remotely resembling Mao Tse-tung. The chosen agents of Sax Rohmer's indefatigable plotter were not dull commissars and mindless hordes of Chinese soldiers but thugs, dacoits, smooth managers of opium dens with trap-doors opening conveniently into tidal reaches of the Thames, even (if

memory serves) a poisonous red slug that crawled through bedroom windows. His plots, which harmed nobody, were solely designed to give Nayland Smith, with the dubious help of Dr. Petrie, an opportunity of foiling them; and the battle between the two antagonists was fought out with a certain stately courtesy. Dr. Fu Manchu, as befitted a man of his high birth and gigantic intellect, dressed in silken robes. He would no sooner have dreamed of appearing in public in a kind of pyjama jacket than of being seen on a balcony with Mr. Khrushchev. Above all he made no secret of the fact that he was a sinister figure, bent on world domination.

Ever-rolling Stream

I WAS invited last week to attend the first annual general meeting of the Victorian Society, an organization pledged to do the same service for Victorian architecture as the Georgian Group does for the Georgian. We met, rather excitingly, in the Lord Chief Justice's court in the Royal Courts of Justice and listened to a talk by John Betjeman on G. E. Street, who built them. It struck me afterwards that the preservation societies are catching up alarmingly quickly with the ages they are designed to protect. The Victorian Society extends its shadow over architecture up to 1914, but an Edwardian Society is sure to be formed soon dedicated to the work of Lutyens and his school; not many years later we



"You can see where he got his great big idea from."

may expect the Neo-Georgian Association to launch its pleas in defence of the glorious old rows of semi-detached houses along the Hendon By-pass; and by my calculation the movement to protect Basil Spence's Coventry Cathedral will come into being at roughly the same time as the cathedral is completed, and the first appeals to save Arne Jacobsen's St. Catherine's College will be in the post before the concrete is dry.

Long Back and Sides

LOOKING forward to a golden age of his profession, the President of the National Hairdressers' Federation forecasts a restoration of wig-making as a major part of the craft. Golden ages of the wig have come and gone since the days of Marcus Aurelius's wife, Faustina, who rang the changes on her collection of several hundred without, so far as I can trace, disturbing her husband's Meditations, and Hannibal, often something of a hide-fancier in the field, who used them as a means of disguise. The English heyday, following French example, came in with the flamboyant Charles II, thrived at luxuriant length under Queen Anne, and went out with George III. If the National Federation really mean to fight down the modern English dread of exhibitionism they might exploit Pepys's admission that on going to church in one "it did not prove so strange as I was afraid it would."

Colour in Our Lives

IT was inapposite, I thought, that British European Airways should launch its onslaught against the use of make-up by its girl employees only a day or so after it had announced its plans for new aircraft colour-schemes. If aeroplanes are to have their wings painted red all over in order to facilitate recognition in the air, surely it isn't unreasonable for the hostesses to apply a modicum of eye-shadow in order to fulfil what is after all a basically similar function on the ground.

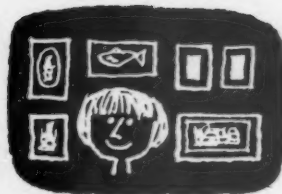
— MR. PUNCH

Budget Price Changes

Some of the advertisements in this issue of *Punch* were printed before the Budget, which may have affected the prices quoted. You should make sure from your retailer or from the advertiser direct what is the present correct price.



Therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.



CRADLE TO UNIVERSITY

8 What Children Look At

By PAUL REILLY

OF all the nannyisms that have constrained the English middle classes the most inhibiting has been that favourite injunction about not putting ideas into the child's head. From it have stemmed all manner of public and private prejudices masquerading as principles—such as that if you stick to the facts you can't go far wrong; that the middle of the road is the only proper place for right-thinking people; or that what was good enough for your grandfather is good enough for you.

Now, I belong to the impoverished generation that was seldom endowed with more than two grandfathers, but even so I find that last prescription hard to follow, for what was good enough for one of my grandfathers was certainly not good enough for the other, and vice versa.

I recall them both with equal piety and affection, but the fact remains that no two households could have been less alike—the one a trim, comfortable, prosperous set-piece with matching furniture, books behind glass, glass in front of china, and a staff who dutifully changed from blue-and-white to black-and-white at some indeterminate hour in the middle of the day; the other shabby and usually staffless, smelling strongly of paraffin and tobacco, with no two pieces of furniture alike and little attempt to protect anything from dust or disorder. Neither boasted a nursery and neither was designed to put up with children, though both had to suffer them for long periods in the holidays.

I recall, too, my very different reactions to my periodic visits to these so dissimilar establishments—how to the one I would go anticipating the little luxuries of electric light switches, hot baths and hot drinks at night, fresh apples in the morning and a resounding gong before meals; and how to the other I would go knowing full well that I

would have to buckle to, get myself up unaided, be in my place before prayers, help clear away and then keep out of sight till it was time to peck a bearded cheek and grope my way to bed by the light of a faltering candle.

As I have said, neither household was designed for children since both my grandfathers were in their own way egoists and had reached that age when the hands of the clock had to revolve round their own convenience, but both contributed to my upbringing and to my visual education such as it is. And looking back it is clear to me that even at the age when balls and bikes meant more than truth and beauty, part of me was comparing and judging the settings that my two venerable grandfathers had chosen for themselves. I think I sensed even then that personality was more important to a house or a room than any amount of off-the-peg convention, and even perhaps that a genuine old piece, however humble, was more appealing than a reproduction, however grand (this was before the arrival of modern designs that could stand on their own feet).

For instance the only part of my merchant grandfather's house that really came alive to me (or which I now clearly remember) was the hall with its frightening array of horns and antlers and stuffed heads with sorrowful glass eyes. Dead as door-nails as they were, they lived in my imagination, for had not my grandfather stalked them, shot them, stuffed them and hung them, and were they not therefore much more real than the evenly polished mahogany of his dining-room suite or the serried rows of matching spines in his glazed bookcases?

My architect grandfather could offer nothing so dramatic, but on the other hand almost everything, however dilapidated, seemed to talk—the Regency bracket clock that he alone could wind; the chipped plaster bust of Byron; the

great Victorian desk brought into retirement from his City office; the vast pile of unbound copies of *The Times* that his father had collected throughout the Crimean War but which he could neither sell nor destroy; the temperamental oil lamps that called for constant attention; two sea paintings from Nelson's times; and even his own meticulous drawings of architectural details—they all gave me ideas and things to think about when I was being seen and not heard.

So, if I were asked, as I have been, what recommendations I would make to young parents planning the ideal home for their children, I would say choose things that will draw the children out and start them thinking. I don't mean just curiosities with travellers' tales attached to them (though they can be useful) but things with character and personality that have been bought with care and purpose or with love and laughter. There is no more cramping an atmosphere for children than the fag-end of a convention whether in Kensington or Kennington.

I was once sent by a friend who was about to be married a list of things that he and his fiancée wished for wedding presents, and was astonished to find near the bottom of the column the word "pictures." Clearly a couple who would allow their friends and relations to choose for them something so personal and revealing as pictures were about to establish yet another insipid, colourless, impersonal middle-class home in which nothing but the heating system has been bought with any conviction, and no one, when the time comes, will dare say boo to Nanny—a home where the cat will survive but curiosity will die, and where will be born and bred another generation of little gentlefolk starved from birth of any visual interest or excitement. The

children will be conditioned in advance for their framed prep-school photographs, their common-room mezzotints, their drawing-room water-colours (from the art department on the fourth floor), their cardinals and lobsters in the dining-room and eventually perhaps, in the board-room, their portraits in oils (just send a photograph).

How different it all might have been had our grandfathers listened to William Morris: "Keep nothing you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful." And how different we could

still make it were we to listen to our more recent prophets such as the late Professor Lethaby, who said that a room, like a garden, can be kept in order only by continual weeding; or Sir Gordon Russell, who forty years ago wrote: "The doctrine that nothing is beautiful unless it is old has created an army of swindlers whose artful work may in time even bring discredit on the lovely craftsmanship which they attempt to imitate."

It is this combination of faulty weeding and wrong thinking about the past

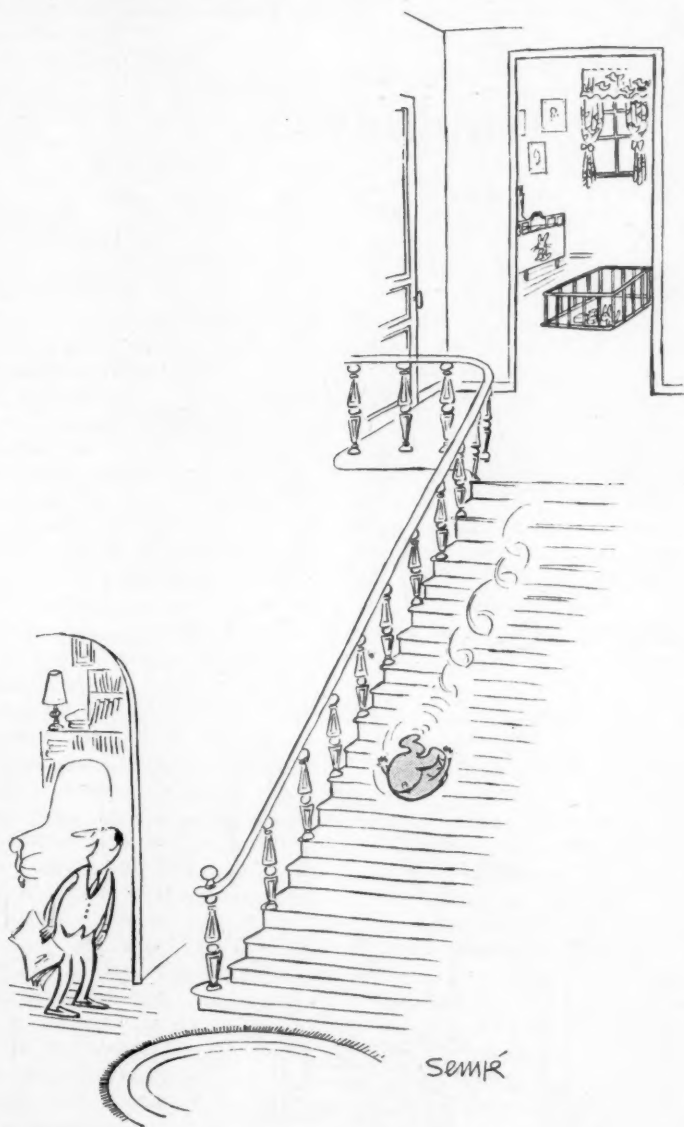
which has rendered the average English home so vulnerable to the shafts of the moderns.

But let us examine for a moment what the new world has to offer. I think again of two households that seem fairly typical, one an up-to-date salesman's, the other a designer's ménage. The former has all the recognizable features of the "contemporary" world—too many wallpapers on too few walls; too much ebony on too much brass; rather too many plants struggling to survive in their cramping pots; far too few books; everything from the motor-car outside to the upholstery inside coming in two tones; and in the kitchen a rash of crude reds and yellows in unbreakable plastics. Upstairs a master bedroom, again with a tendency to black and brass, and, next door, a fitted boy's room with pin-up board and working top with drawers beneath (someone has done it himself and has done it rather well). The few pictures are modestly framed reproductions of recently deceased masters, calculated to deceive the eye.

The whole effect is so much better and fresher than would have been found in the 'twenties or 'thirties (chocolate-and-cream and autumn tints) that it is hard to criticize, but the fact is that none of it looks lived in. It is like an exhibition house at Olympia—again a rather sterile set piece, though the pieces are different. One has the feeling that the boy at his dutiful homework would also look like an exhibit.

The designer's home is quite the opposite. There are, to start with, a couple of dogs in the house, so nothing is ever quite clean. Although the father has an office elsewhere to work in, he also has a drawing-board at home which seems to take up a good deal of the living-room. The furniture has not been bought in matching suites. There is one large rectilinear but very comfortable modern settee upholstered in charcoal, also a new easy chair shaped like a pudding-bowl. This looks quite at home with a couple of curvaceous, button-backed, vintage Victorian seats. The fireplace is a square opening with a long slab, half-shelf half-seat, below it, running the length of the wall and offering perches for six or more occasional guests. The background colours are not memorable, but the room is by no means colourless.

The children's room is chaotic with



"He's walking."

nothing put away except the bunk beds which tuck one under the other. There are everywhere plenty of books and pictures (by artists who are still alive) and plenty of light to see them by; for it seems that, like Hardwick Hall, this house too is more glass than wall. The dining-room, or rather that part of the kitchen where they eat, is the only fairly uniform area in the house—the modern table and plywood chairs, for all their informality, do give a coherence that more conventional people seek with their reproduction Sheraton sets. There is no silver around, but much stainless steel, some excellent pots on

shelves and an odd variety of *objets trouvés*.

The children seem quite at ease in any part of the house and can tell you a good deal about the things around them. My guess is that they will grow up ready to accept changes, for nothing seems to stay in the same place very long. They will grow up too with a healthy curiosity about people and things, for full as the house is of unusual objects it is often more full of unusual people—and most important of all the children take part in the strange, seemingly disorganized, talkative life that goes on.

And therein lies the key to furnishing for children—participation is, I believe, the currently acceptable word. Let the children feel that they belong to the house and that the house and all things in it belong to them. But first choose things that are worth while in themselves. And don't forget the wedding.

Other contributors to this series will be:

The Rev. SIMON PHIPPS
R. G. G. PRICE
C. H. ROLPH
ALAN ROSS
SIR JOHN WOLFENDEN

Look, No Windmills!

By H. F. ELLIS

A PARTY of French excursionists flew to Southend at the weekend . . .

Not interested?

Hundreds of Dutch holidaymakers, then, spent three hours in the Isle of Wight, taking advantage of the resumption of day cruises from Holland . . .

Revelling in the brief snatches of sunshine at Dover, these happy Belgian trippers . . .

I do see that these news items, baldly presented, may not hold the attention of every reader. It is possible that they fail to excite *any* reader—bar one. If

so, I am neither surprised nor dismayed. The inexplicable thing, the mystery I now wish to examine at moderate length, is that they excite *me*. I am filled with an inexhaustible sense of wonder every time I hear of foreigners flocking to this country just for the day.

When they come for a week or a fortnight, that I can readily understand. Britain has many treasures and great beauty to offer to those who can spare the time to poke and peer about her lanes and byways, her castles and cathedrals and historic cities. I certainly see nothing remarkable or mystifying

about Dutchmen or Belgians who decide to spend their annual holidays motoring or sauntering up and down this blessed isle. Nor am I baffled, in any stupidly snobbish way, by the attractions of a day-trip as such. I am ready to spend a couple of hours in Dieppe at any time, if somebody will put up the money. To be abroad, to be in France, even for so brief a spell, would suit me admirably. But that anybody should feel the same about just being in *England*, in the Isle of Wight, is something I cannot, in any true sense of the word, comprehend.

There is obviously a sad failure of the imagination here. Just as Dieppe is excitingly different for me, so to the Frenchman Southend must exude an intoxicating foreignness, an air of strangeness and wonder. That, in principle, I accept. But when it comes down to detail, when I try to put myself in the Frenchman's *espadrilles* and visualize just what it is about Southend, or any other handy English coastal resort, that captivates and transports him, I am gravelled. The old hopeless insularity, that





"First time I've heard you describe it as good agricultural land."

registers everything English as the norm, or below it, bars me from viewing Hastings or Felixstowe through the eyes of a foreigner. What *can* there be about these well-conducted watering-places to excite in a Dutchman the same sort of shiver of delight that would overcome me in Dieppe or (possibly) Boulogne?

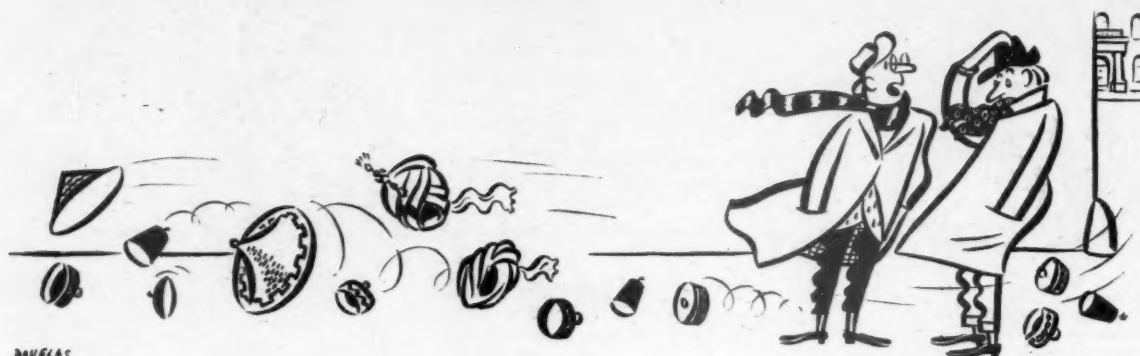
Dieppe! The very basin is utterly French, backed by those straight-faced houses standing tall (as deportment experts say) and strongly suggesting Simenon. Then come the cries of all those blousy porters, the cobbles on the quay, the strong rich scent of *sole à la dieppoise* being garnished in innumerable kitchens with thousands of mussels and shrimps. Over a shop window gleams that blessedly French word *Boulangerie*, with the hardly less satisfying *Charcuterie* next door but one. *Réclame* is everywhere.

Am I seriously to ask myself to believe that if my name were Jean or Jan I should be similarly transported by the words "Grocer and Provision Merchant"; that "Family Butcher" done in black lettering on a dark brown background would flood my whole being with a kind of ecstasy of release? What, when I paused outside a tea-shop in Folkestone, would be the item on the displayed menu card that pre-eminently brought home to me the delicious foreignness of my surroundings? What scents, what sounds, what quaintness of dress, of manners or of architecture would chiefly ravish my senses?

My feeble insular imagination refuses, as I say, to provide satisfactory answers to these questions. Its reactions are almost entirely negative. I can see that a Dutchman might be struck by the

absence of windmills, a Frenchman by the shutterless windows, almost any European by the difficulty of finding a table in the sun at which to trifle with a red mullet *à la livournaise* and sip a glass of the local Kentish or Sussex wine. But a mere lack of the familiar does not make a day abroad. It is the positive pleasures and excitements that I seek in vain.

Not many days ago I thought that the answer was going to come my way without conscious effort on my part. That party of French excursionists had flown to Southend at the week-end and there to greet them, before my very eyes as I gazed at the television screen, was one of those ineffable B.B.C. interviewers who could surely be relied upon, as ever, to ask them what the devil they had come for. He would ask them the very questions I have so often



"Wind is in the east again, I see."

wanted to ask. And he did. Not exactly, perhaps, in the way I should have asked them myself. I should have been inclined, in my shuffling way, to begin by apologizing for bothering a stranger on holiday with impertinent inquiries, instead of dashing straight in with a scandalized "What are you here for?" or "What's the *idea*?" or "Aren't you *cold* in that cheap-looking jacket of yours?" But I suppose the truth is that the politenesses had been got through with, so to speak, off-stage. The interviewer, I dare say, had buttonholed his selected Frenchmen in advance and secured their co-operation with a deprecating "I wonder if you chaps would be so kind . . . just one or two brief . . . and then afterwards perhaps we could all have a cup of coffee-essence together?" I am not so simple as to imagine that, when the first subject strolls as it were by accident round the corner of a nougat-kiosk and without the flicker of an eyelid accepts a jab in the waistcoat from the interviewer's microphone, the two men are actually meeting for the first time. If they were there would be a chance that the interviewee might jab back, and much as I should relish—but we are straying from the point, which is that these Frenchmen were asked *why* they had come, what they would *do* now they had arrived, what it was they *liked* about Southend. I was on the verge of a tremendous revelation.

The tragic thing is that, as so often with these fascinating "roving reports," I cannot remember a single answer that any of these Frenchmen made. It is only the incisive, probing, querulous questions that remain firmly fixed in my mind.

Ballade of Great Expectations

FACTS are solid as bats or bricks,
tougher than eagles, vicious as mules,
stubborn as women, blacker than Styx.

Facts *go on* as an idiot drools,
and facts can madden; but anger cools—
get round the chasm if you can't jump it:
to rail at Fate is the fate of fools:
this is the Budget, like it or lump it.

Figures are easier. Figures will mix—
monks of an order with worldly rules,
model employers, willing to fix
flexible-up-to-a-point schedules.

Facts are hard as repentance stools:
Yours was the sin? Then you must hump it.

Figures are leprechauns, facts are ghouls:
this is the Budget, like it or lump it.

Interpretation trumps all tricks—
figures and facts are working tools,
making the ha'pence balance the kicks,
the pennies pay for the football pools.

Economics has scores of schools—
take your tub to the Park, and thump it:
down with the booby who whines and pules:
this is the Budget, like it or lump it.

Envoi

Prince, Clarenceux Kings in sable and gules
march in the night to a far-off trumpet:
reach for your barbitone capsules:
this is the Budget, like it or lump it.

— R. C. SCRIVEN

AIR TRAVEL



Seat-belts . . .



and sweets to suck . . .



papers . . .



and periodicals . . .



pillows . . .



pick-me-ups . . .



and progress-reports . . .



and tax-free cigarettes for sale . . .



and coffee . . .



*and a running accompaniment
of information and instruction . . .*



and of course . . .

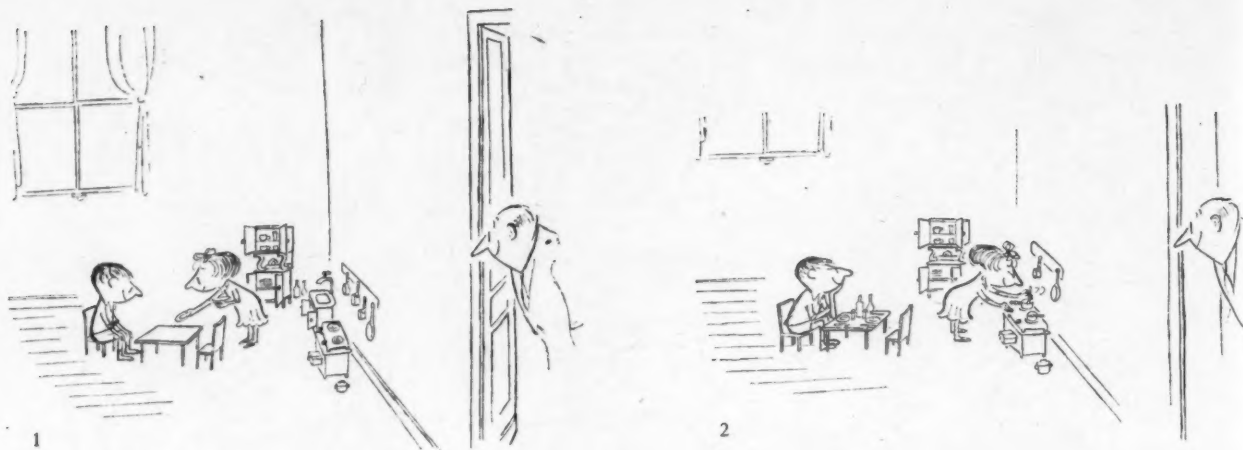


meals . . .

*there's usually hardly enough time for them all before the flight's over. What a pity they aren't kept
for the really important parts of the journey . . .*



. . . the interminable waits at airports and terminals.



Keep Your Feet Off My Vertebrae

"... Its pages are crammed with the facts of life and love in Japan to-day. ... about getting a massage from Richi, a girl attendant at a bath-house ('While he sipped a cool martini served by a roving attendant, Richi massaged his muscles, expertly cracked his knuckles, and finally climbed on his back and manipulated his spine with her toes ...')."

THAT's what the book review said ... I don't know whether that was the same Richi who used to work in the bath-house at 46 Hamakoyo Street, Tokyo, but it sounds just like her. She tried the same lark on me one Wednesday evening, but

By **PATRICK RYAN**

she picked the wrong boyo that time, all right. She didn't know I'd been apprenticed to an all-in wrestler.

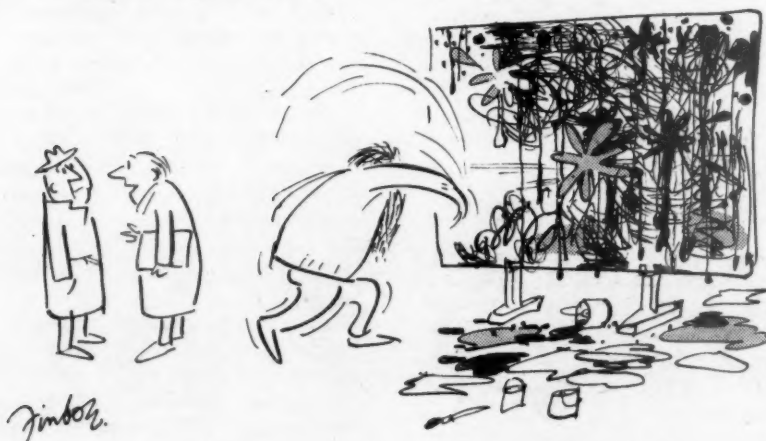
I'd had my bath and, steamed, scrubbed, parboiled and perfumed, was lying face-down on the slab, pores a-gape, relaxed as a jellyfish, awaiting the massage. The roving attendant brought me a cool martini made of equal parts of saki and lava-juice, and the band played dejectedly over in the corner. They have these little bands in all the best bath-houses. There were

three musicians, old, wizened, naked to the waist and perspiring gently as they plinked and wailed and thrummed to produce a thin, apologetic skein of music. I suppose playing down there in a Turkish-bath atmosphere all day weakened their attack and played hell with their strings.

I had sipped the martini and was waiting for the flames to die down on my tongue when this Richi comes up behind me, grabs each of my hands in turn and expertly cracks the knuckles, dislocating most of my fingers so that they became useless as weapons of defence. Then she vaults up on to my back and starts manipulating my spine with her toes.

It was excruciating. Not only did she weigh about eleven and a half stone but her toe-nails could have done with a trim. The band found new life and struck up a dance rhythm and she cha-cha'd up and down my backbone while I sagged and bounced like a trampoline. Every time I raised my head to get at her she kicked me in the neck, or held me face down with both hands while she did some fancy buck-and-wing footwork on my shoulders.

The roving martini-attendant, the other two masseurs, and the man from the steam room got together and clapped in time to the music. With my spine segments clicking like castanets, the



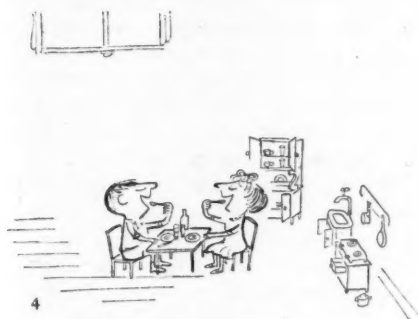
"When I asked what his aim was, he said it was improving!"



3



5



4



6

SEMI

affair took on a flamenco beat. I sensed now that this was their Wednesday-night revenge session, the weekly ritual when they gave the humiliation treatment to any Western sucker they could get face-down on the slab and helpless with saki and lava-juice.

Up and down me, Richi galumphed and pirouetted, laughing fit to split a kimono, stamping her heels, digging her lobster-toes deep down in between my vertebrae. The band was beating her up to a frenzy and it was like three witch-doctors and a mechanical rammer hunting over my spine. I knew I couldn't take much more . . . my back was going like a sailor's hammock on Friday night . . . another couple of choruses and she'd have me out cold . . . it was now or never for Western Supremacy and the British Raj . . . somehow I got my nerveless hands together under the slab, gripped and cracked my knuckles back into place . . . I let her cha-cha off down to my fat end . . . and, just when she thought she'd got me, I swung my right arm up and

back and got a round-arm nelson on both her legs . . .

She kicked and struggled and shouted in Japanese, but I hadn't fought at the Corn Exchange, Hanley, for nothing. I tightened the lock, turned over on the slab and whipped my legs up in a scissors around her waist. She fought back like mad and I've got to admit that Richi was good. It's the jiu-jitsu, you know, they're all trained to it from childhood. And I was giving away a good two and a half stone, anyway. She came down with her knees full in the pit of my stomach and put a double throat-hold on me that stretched my neck as tight as Dooley's drum.

She tried next to work into a proper stranglehold, but I kept her up out of reach with my leg-scissors. I could tell she realized she was up against a professional now, and she was pretty scared, too, from the way she was yelling. All right, I said to myself, I'll show you now, my fine cleat-footed friend, I'll teach you to dance a fandango up my back.

I twisted sideways out of the throat-lock and we rolled off the slab, across the wet marble floor and into the band. The oldest one came at me with a cut-down sackbut and I sent him flying with the old fore-arm chop up the bracket. The roving martini-attendant hit me on the back of the head with a tin tray, but I got him by the hair and tossed him into the plunge-bath. I'd just about got Richi shoulders-down and knocking on the canvas when the steam-room man jumped on my shoulders. I gave him the overhead sling and he took three racks of towels into the bath with him.

Richi wriggled free and ran screaming out through the door, followed hotly by the bandsmen and the rest of the staff.

I dried myself off and looked around the bath-house. It was empty; all the bathers had gone as well . . . I'd shown the lot of them. They'd think twice at 46 Hamakoyo Street, Tokyo, before they tried the spine-dancing humiliation on a decent red-blooded Englishman again.

I dressed and walked out of the place in a pardonable glow of satisfaction. A blow had been struck for the Western way of life. As I drove away up the street two police cars screamed to a stop outside the bath-house.

I was most impressed with that Richi's wrestling technique, and when I went back into the grunt-and-groan game as a promoter, I wrote to her and offered her a good spot at the Corn Exchanges fighting the Russian Amazon in the old mud-bath. But she never replied and I reckoned she was either a bad loser or she'd moved away from 46 Hamakoyo Street.

☆

"Thirty men have applied to join the London Scottish Territorial Regiment since their recruiting party two weeks ago at which 59 different brands of Scotch whiskies were served.

The first applicant arrived on the morning after the party."—*Guernsey Express*
The others came round later.

Bathrooms by Debrett

By ALISON ADBURGHAM

UNVEILING ceremonies are usually solemn occasions . . . unctuous speeches . . . anxious moments . . . *will it unveil?* But this one promised to be different: the unveiling of SCULPTURA, a bathroom suite designed by the Marquess of Queensberry. The rites would be according to the rules, of course, but it seemed possible a little cheerfulness might break in.

The invitation said: "The Right Hon. The Earl Granville, M.C., will unveil the SCULPTURA suite and display of Lilco sanitary ware and introduce the Marquess of Queensberry, after which a hot Shropshire lunch and champagne will be served." Clearly, a county occasion and a very upper-class bathroom. Yet it would be a professional job, no Gentleman's Folly. For Lord

Granville is the ninth of his family to be Chairman of the Lilleshall Company, which goes back to 1790 when it owned six hundred collieries: that is to say, six hundred holes in the Shropshire fields. The Twelfth Marquess of Queensberry, Viscount Drumlanrig and Baron Douglas, has come up the hard way via Eton, the Royal Horse Guards, Chelsea School of Art, the Central School of Arts and Crafts, North Staffordshire Technical College, a tile works, a china company, and now, at thirty, he is a consultant designer in ceramics. In September he takes up the appointment of Professor of Ceramics at the Royal College of Art. The creation of the Sculptura suite cannot, therefore, be regarded as a mere flash in the pan.



"Cancelled? . . . the Darts Match?"

Not until the speeches were over and the curtain drawn back to expose the bathroom suite was it revealed that there was no bath. Everything else was there that could possibly be required for ablutionary purposes, alive or dead—a post-mortem slab with attached sink being included in the display. Baths, it was explained, are no longer made in vitreous-glazed fireclay, the material of the suite; like marble before it, it is too expensive for modern times and too heavy for modern houses.

The designer said that he had been guided by his sense of form and by advice from the medical profession. He designs in the round, not on the drawing-board, and had found great pleasure in this job because it was on a bigger scale than anything he had done before: after tea-cups and oven-ware there was inspiration in the mere size of basins, cisterns, and showers. These very plumbing things had, under his potter's hands, achieved an elegant *joie de vivre* in no way incongruous with their functional purpose.

It is not the first time that our aristocracy has applied its talents to plumbers' pieces. Sir John Harington, a godson of Queen Elizabeth I, invented the first water-closet. This was erected at Kelston, which is appropriately near Bath; and later a copy of the closet was installed at the Queen's Palace at Richmond. The first Elizabeth was not only a good patron of the arts but was also well ahead of contemporary thought in that "she hath a bath once a month, whether she need it or no." Sir John's invention did not come into general use for another three hundred years, not even in the other royal residences. As late as 1844 fifty-three over-flowing cesspits were found under Windsor Castle. In spite of this the Hopper Closet which was patented some time later was named the "Castle," a cheaper model being named the "Cottage." Buckingham Palace, a comparatively modern building, was very ill-equipped until the "Optimus" was hopefully installed in it and into other royal residences at the instance of the Prince Consort.

To his practical mind is also attributed the original and admirable suggestion of a train lavatory; and this the Great Western Railway incorporated in their magnificently regal Queen's Carriage built in 1850. Other lines were not so

avant garde, and Lytton Strachey has told how the royal train would draw up on some border moorland in the long journey to Aberdeen "and the high-bred dames were obliged to descend to earth by the perilous foot-board," the only pair of folding steps being reserved for Her Majesty's saloon. In the days of crinolines such moments were sometimes awkward and it was occasionally necessary to summon Mr. Johnstone, the short, sturdy manager of the Caledonian Railway, who, more than once, in a high gale and drenching rain, with great difficulty "pushed up"—as he himself described it—"some unlucky Lady Blanche or Lady Agatha into her compartment."

Towards the end of the reign Her Majesty's most wealthy subjects were converting bedrooms into bathrooms, the baths they installed being as imposing as four-poster beds. They were made of marble and encased in panelled mahogany, with an elaborately carved hood, or sumptuous curtains, at the shower end. Fittings were in brass or copper, and *de luxe* models had taps at both ends and each side in order to give a fast, evenly distributed flow; some had an opening like a letter-box above the taps to provide a cataract; others had stops like an organ which, pulled out, created waves, turbulence, and rain. The possession of such a bath was a sign of wealth and caste; the possession of any kind of bath with running water was, until the turn of the century, something to brag about.

The first basins with cold taps came in about 1850, the water being drawn by hand-pump; and Mr. Ewart invented his remarkable geyser in 1868. Basins were sunk into the marble tops of wash-stands which had hitherto held the china ewer and basin. Some of these decorated basins are fine examples of the potter's art, as were the blue-and-white or brown-and-white water-closets of the later Victorian and Edwardian periods, with their kingfishers on bullrushes, their sprays of apple blossom, their country landscape scenes.

Surely it is in decoration that the next development in bathroom fittings must be? We are fast wearying of the ubiquitous, characterless pastels. Lord Queensberry should now be dreaming of water-lilies and weeping willows; and Lord Granville must no longer speak of sanitary ware but of bathroom ceramics.

Man in Apron

by *Larry*



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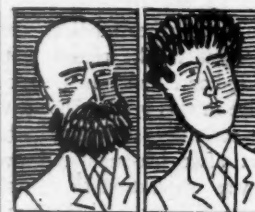
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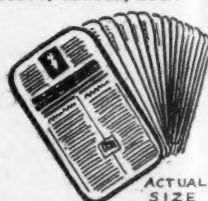
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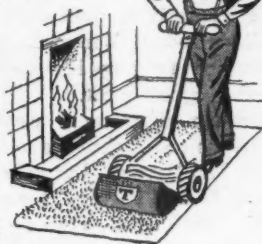
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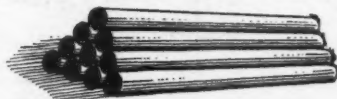
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A Little Co-operation

By MARJORIE RIDDELL

AT Porridge's where I am the Press Relations Officer I have an office equipped with pretty well everything I need except the one thing that would be really useful—a gun.

I first noticed this when I met Mr. Beaver, who is the Buyer in the Kitchen and Bathroom Department. I had been with the store less than a week.

The features editor of one of the women's magazines was planning an illustrated article on cooking utensils, some of which she proposed to choose from Porridge's. This would be a nice piece of publicity, and it was handed to me just like that. It wasn't an idea I had thought up and then had to sell (figuratively speaking) to the magazine. I didn't even have to persuade the magazine to use some of Porridge's merchandise. *They* approached *me*. And the procedure was routine. Simple, easy routine.

Ha.

I made an appointment with Mr. Beaver for the features editor to come and meet him one morning at ten o'clock and choose the utensils she wanted. And at ten o'clock that morning I met my first snag.

Mr. Beaver was not in the Department.

No one knew where he was. No one cared where he was. No one knew when he would be back. And no one had the authority to help us in his absence.

The features editor was not pleased.

I managed to persuade her not to exclude Porridge's from the feature and promised to ring her to arrange a further appointment.

In the afternoon I went back to Kitchens and Bathrooms to have it out with Mr. Beaver. But before I could speak he said angrily "I want a word with you, Miss Turner—you were

supposed to be bringing someone from the press to see me this morning."

"I did bring her. We——"

"You came when I wasn't here."

"Yes. And no one knew where you were. That's what——"

"I don't expect you to bring people from the press into my Department when I am not here."

"Neither do I," I said. "That is why I made an appointment. Which is why I thought you would be in the Department."

"How *could* I be? I was at coffee."

"We came at ten o'clock, as arranged."

"I go to coffee at ten o'clock," he said. "You had no right to make an appointment for a time when I am not here."

"The appointment," I said, "was made with you."

"Then I can only say," he said, "that you have been most inefficient. It was



"By some curious trick of arithmetic to-day's Bob-a-Job total comes to nineteen-and-eightpence."

gross mismanagement to make an appointment with me for a time when I am out at coffee."

I gave up.

We tried again the following morning at eleven-thirty, and this time Mr. Beaver was with us. The features editor chose several articles and said she would like to have them delivered that afternoon at the magazine's own studio for photographing early the next morning.

The store closes at five-thirty, and at twenty-six minutes past five, on my sixth attempt, I got Mr. Beaver on the 'phone to tell him that none of the articles had reached my office. And Mr. Beaver said that because the features editor said she wanted them this afternoon how could he be expected to know she meant this afternoon. He would send them up to me in the morning.

The features editor had chosen seven cooking utensils. And on the following morning I had seven parcels in my office. But I didn't have seven cooking utensils. I had six cooking utensils and an ironing board.

I rang Mr. Beaver.

"They've arrived," I said, "but I have an ironing-board instead of the coffee percolator."

"That's right," he said.

"Oh. But why?"

"Because I thought she would rather have the ironing board."

"Why," I said, "did you think that?"

"Because it's the best ironing board on the market. And it's new. It's absolutely new. That's why I know she'll want to photograph it. It looks the same as other ironing boards, but the screws in the legs are made of a new kind of alloy. This alloy has never before been used for screws in ironing-board legs, and—"

"Mr. Beaver," I said, "she doesn't want an ironing board."

"How do you know?"

"If she did she would have chosen one. She came to the store twice—twice—for the sole purpose of choosing what she wanted. And she chose a coffee percolator. She didn't choose an ironing board."

"I know she didn't."

"Well, then."

"Well?"

"Well," I said carefully, "well—do you know *why* she didn't choose the ironing board?"



"Go home, boy!"

"Yes," he said. "Because I didn't show it to her."

"No," I said. "No, no. That wasn't the—"

"I couldn't show it to her," he said. "It only came in yesterday afternoon."

"I will be glad to talk to her about the ironing board some other time, Mr. Beaver. But I know she won't want it sent to the studio now. It simply won't do for this particular feature."

"Why not?"

"It's a feature on cooking utensils!"

"I know it is."

After a moment I said "But you don't use an ironing board for cooking!"

"Of course you don't." He sounded irritable. "I know that. But you do use it in a kitchen."

"But this is not a feature on kitchens—"

"No self-respecting housewife would have a kitchen without an ironing-board," Mr. Beaver said. "Believe me, I know. You have not been in this business as long as I have, and—"

"This is not a feature on kitchens!"

"Why not?"

"Because," I said, "it's on cooking utensils."

"Why?"

"Because that's what the editor wants!"

"Then he doesn't know his job,"

Mr. Beaver said. "None of his readers can be interested in cooking without being interested in kitchens. He's approaching the whole thing from the wrong angle."

"Mr. Beaver—"

"I tell you what you do," Mr. Beaver said. "You ring the editor and tell him that Mr. Beaver of Porridge's of Mayfair knows far more about this sort of thing than he does. Tell him he must change the feature completely and re-plan it to cover the entire kitchen. Tell him I said so. Will you do that?"

"If I do," I said, "will you let me have the percolator?"

"What percolator? Oh, the percolator. Yes, of course. But only if you will also send the ironing board."

"But—oh, all right then. All right, I'll do that."

"Thank you," Mr. Beaver said.

"Thank you," I said.

We hung up.

Next day the Assistant Advertising Director came into my room and said "Miss Turner, why have you put an ironing-board in the stationery cupboard?"

So I said . . .

But there's no need to go into all that again.

(To be continued)



"Oil your baggage, sir?"

Visit to the Works

By VERONA HOWARTH

THEY fed us V.I.P. lunch and took us round.

First up. Fractionating columns they said, or perhaps it was cooling towers. Painted continuously like the Forth Bridge with a paint containing no paint because of the blistering. They told us the number of men on maintenance. The effluent was decarbonized and the filter scrapes fed to the furnaces. It was possible to ascend the third on the left by that ladder beyond the cage, if any gentleman? Murmurs expressive of the excellence of the firm's lunch.

Down again. We of course are moving against the flow. Really a terrible thing to do, ha-ha. Layout is synchronized on the Wallet-Siedet-Brauset-Zischt system and no material ever goes backwards after going forwards, except the directors' guests.

No waste, they pointed out virtuously. The truncated end-cuttings are sucked

through this pipe and by vacuum action are returned to the beginning, like old Sam Shore, passing along the subsidiary conveyor and by-passing the bins on the intermediate mezzanine.

Descending to the depths, this is the new machinery. The agonies of trying to get a dollar allocation. Then we said Western Germany. Finally that firm in Wales. But they said seventeen and five-eighths was out of the question. We stuck to our guns and it weighs forty-three tons not including the auxiliary by-rollers. A gasp of admiration and they told us how many floors it would drop through if they were fools enough to mount it anywhere but in the cellar.

Rising somewhat, we were allowed to peep while in hushed tones they hinted at the mysteries of the control room. Just one fully-qualified man, they said, can run this whole complex at any one time, with four chaps to watch the

pressures on the dials. We gazed at the dials.

"I always supposed," I said tactlessly—but it had been an excellent lunch, "that these impressive plants really ran on what Bill chalked up for George when he went off at night."

Shocked, they spoke of the millions invested, the high sense of responsibility of their staff. In case of an emergency or unavoidable gap in supervision, instructions might be passed on by means of a tape-recorder in the ante-room. They switched it on. Respectfully we listened.

"Ron to Joe," it said, "watch No. 3 and keep her up to it. Batching on 47 two points ahead. There's a party of mugs coming round soon after three so be ready with plenty of bull."

Pillory

Readers offer their grievances in response to A.P.H.'s appeal

It was beautiful, clean and shining, but I got stuck again as usual. I took it off and unbuttoned the only button that had been buttoned, and tried once more. I pulled my nice clean shirt on over my head and I buttoned up all the other buttons, as well as the only button that, buttoned, my laundry knows must be unbuttoned before I can put my shirt on over my head. Why does my laundry button this button, and this button only, of all buttons?

ROBIN PAIGE, SHEFFIELD

OLD KNOCKING AT THE DOOR

Could the Postmaster-General extend his friendly efforts in the direction of restoring one of the pleasures of my youth—the postman's knock? The one-time vivid figure of the postman has faded almost to nothingness; he has a mere shadow of his former glory. The knock used to say: "Your friend has remembered you," or "Here is something you are longing for." Once the postman announced himself firmly. Now he slips his bundles on our mats and departs in inglorious anonymity.

MRS. M. N. HAWKINS, HIGHGATE, N.6

LIGHT, MORE LIGHT

Cannot something be done about travellers in crowded trains who, occupying corner seats, hold their fully-spread newspapers so that they obtain all available light themselves but deprive their neighbours of anything up to 50 per cent of the light to which they are entitled?

H. K. PEEL, PINNER

Toby Competitions

No. 63—Creepies

THE success of horror films suggests that it might pay to rewrite some of the tried favourites to include a horrific element. Competitors are invited to write a synopsis of such a treatment of one of the following: *The Prisoner of Zenda*; *The Three Musketeers*; *Raffles*; *Little Women*; *Pygmalion*. Limit: 120 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, April 17, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 63, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 60 (Got it Bad)

Symptoms of the fashionable disease of 1960 were asked for, with treatment, if any. Few of the ailments suggested had, superficially, much *chic*; but perhaps this will depend on the first person to catch them. A gratifyingly large number of doctors had their own ideas, and for the most part managed to be suitably obscure. Television was the most popular panalgesic; but a surprisingly well-fancied second was open-plan housing. The prize goes to:

M. A. SLEE

FRITILLARY HOUSE
DUCKLINGTON
WITNEY
OXON

for his clinical account of the symptoms of

THE CREEPS (*Contemporitis*): The patient is usually a middle-aged man. He walks with a characteristic gait known as "mobile-dodger's crouch." One or both kneecaps are cracked from contact with table-tops at unexpected levels. The tips of several fingers may be crushed from the action of folding walls. The skin shows a chronic allergic dermatitis from indoor plants, while the shins may have extensive lacerations caused by the treads of open stairs. The patient has difficulty in believing that he is ever quite alone (open-plan agoraphobia) and if shown a colour chart will go into a violent convulsion.

The following ailments qualify their discoverers for book-tokens:

ADVERTIGO: *Virus*—Isolated 1960. Rectangular, vociferous, photostatic.

Physiological Symptoms—Face white, white, whitest of all; hair munchy, crispy, wispy; eyes fixed.

Psychosomatic Symptoms—Mental confusion; patient persistently washes coloureds, the smallest room, Baby, softest woollies, behind the ears, with Scrunchy Oatsie-Flakies. She eats ravenously monarch-size, filter-tip, double-luxury, hand-rolled smokies, washing them deep-down with inner-cleansing Sopo.

Treatment—Prolonged stay in uninhabited locality.

Prognosis—Will be hopeful, when scientific research has made a large enough locality uninhabited.—Mrs. N. G. Beeny, 28 Streatham Common North, London, S.W.16

ANTI-ANTI: An advanced form of the Anti-complex. Diagnosis is easy; self-diagnosis, however, is very rare. The symptoms are as follows:

- (1) Prickling under the skin (formication)
- (2) Sense of extraordinary vision (aura auroralis)
- (3) Wandering in all directions (agnosia topographica)
- (4) Emission of hot air (aerothermorrhœa)
- (5) In the more advanced cases fallen arches (ptosis) may occur.

Treatment, which may be resented, consists of a restful spell in a cooler environment, with periods of complete isolation daily. Dr. T. C. Dann, 35 Rundell Crescent, London, N.W.4

WATKINSON'S DISEASE: The patient scuffles along humming monotonously and manipulating an imaginary steering-wheel; every few minutes he hurls a curse into the empty air. He has been prestoned, i.e., he has watched his car disintegrate as he sloshed along a motorway. Some of the more pathetic cases have finished paying for their machines.

Treatment is carried out at the M. of T. de-motoring centre at Woburn Abbey, where, after a week of soothing games and

mental decarbonization, patients are introduced to horse-power in its natural form.—Michael Birt, Stone House, Staunton-on-Wye, Herefordshire

HYPERACUSIS: A condition of great sensitivity to noise, existing in two forms: juvenile, or active; adult, or passive. The juvenile form is characterized by intermittent, automatic gyrations with associated hypnotic states, in response to loud and repetitive rhythms. Treatment is unavailing and the condition tends to progress to the adult form. This is characterized by an intense escape desire from certain sounds particularly those suggesting responsibility (e.g., babies crying) and work. Other sounds have a therapeutic effect, especially soft music, the clink of glasses and the pop of corks. Treatment, which may have to be prolonged, consists of regular desensitization with the above-mentioned therapeutic agents.

—Dr. Leopold Goldman, 2 Newborough Road, Shirley, Birmingham

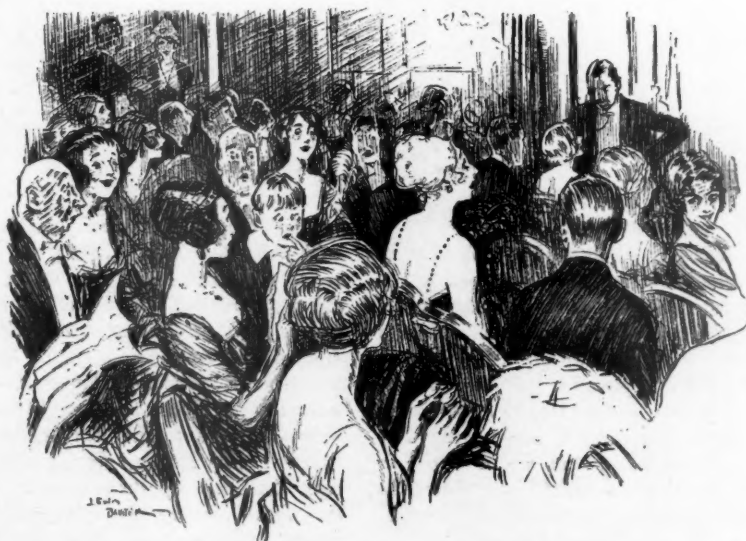
☆

"Sally Hambro, beautiful, 20-year-old ex-débutante, is emigrating to the United States at the end of February... 'I'm going because father thinks the experience will broaden my mind,' Sally told a friend... Sally works as a high-powered secretary in an advertising firm..."—*Daily Express*

And her mind needs broadening?

CHESTNUT GROVE

Lewis Baumer took up the "social cut" from Du Maurier and brought it into the world of the twentieth century.



Small Boy (indicating highly-powdered lady). "MUMMY, MAY I WRITE 'DUST' ON THAT LADY'S BACK?"

January 25, 1920

Sink Art

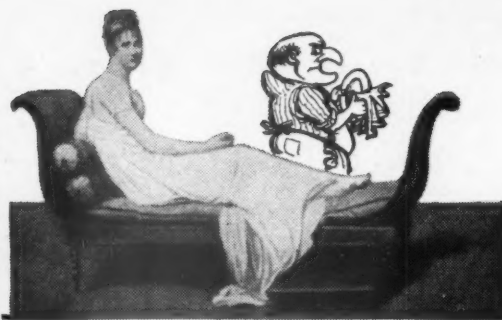
HERE we are bang in the middle of a new art form and no one has appointed himself its chief critic, no one has held a one-man show in a Mayfair Gallery. It is the Washing Line the new artists are aiming at, and no nonsense about not being functional. Was the coffee at breakfast undrinkable? Look at your tea-towel; it gives four recipes, Espresso, Turkish, French and Arabian, so kindly do better to-morrow. What breed is that dog you can see rifling your dust-bin? Study the tea-towel and pick it from twenty doggy friends. Was that ornament that now lies in fifty fragments at your feet really a valuable antique? What period is that early Etruscan vase you are drying? Your tea-towel will tell you.

Are you muddled by herbs, can you arrange your bowl of dessert with careless grace, are you up in veteran cars? Let your tea-towel help you. Can you cut across country to Aunt Hilda's? The map is on the cloth in your hand. Is to-day the 15th and you promised to meet Margaret at ten? There is a calendar on your tea-towel.

Heavens, it is. Well, stop reading tea-towels then. Leave the crocks to drain dry in the rack and you'll just make it.

— ANNE HAWARD

FOR
WOMEN



You Can Keep Your Cottage, Thank You!

WE have done the unthinkable. In a country district where everyone who is anyone—local Top People in fact—lives in a black-and-white striped cottage we have bought a red-brick house, modern and quite without charm, for the simple reason that after years of beams and lath-and-plaster we decided to have bricks between us and the weather for a change.

But an inexorable snobbery decrees that a tumbledown cottage is U whereas modern red-brick is not. Local Top People, and local middle people, think us mad. They don't care a hoot that our new house is in tip-top condition, that the doors and windows fit, and that the

windows are large so that the rooms are flooded with light. They are wedded to their black-and-white stripes and to their winter miseries.

For in the winter, to survive in any room, they must have a booster fire in addition to their open fire; dinner with them is torture and leads to the wearing by the ladies of ever shaggier stoles; their wives are nothing but round woolly bundles, yet are still so paralysed with cold that when you track them down in their kitchens, where they chiefly lurk for warmth, having pushed your way past all the draught-proof curtains in the nearly total darkness produced by heavily latticed windows, all they can do is cling to the rail of their cookers murmuring "I simply can't think when I'm cold."

Of course the cottages come into their own in the summer. Then there is some sense in them. But simultaneously with the sending-off of school trunks in September the frightful thought of the winter clamps down, with racial memories of the cold, the damp, the icy passages, the piercing draughts and the rain that comes down the old-world chimney and puts out the fire.

Yet so powerful is the cult of the country cottage that, in spite of all this, everyone wants one and having bought one they talk to all their cottageless friends about it until the friends want one too. More and more people persuade themselves that uneven floors, spiders, smoking chimneys, bird-ridden thatch, head-crashing doorways, flaking plaster and all the rest of it are what they like best to live with, and as occasionally the owners are famous their cottages and their interior decoration

Continuing Our Great New Romantic Serial

The Story So Far

Instalment V: The Letter

Jasmyne, orphaned blonde whose small-waisted coffee organza looks well in discreet lighting, is penniless owing to her dead Uncle Jem, for whom she once kept house while he was alive, having embezzled her promised fortune. Hard-headed Mat is dead too, his heart having stopped from seeing the local ghost. But Jasmyne is happy in her new life in the Surrey woods with Colonel Stuart, the shyly charming elderly badger-catcher she fell over that eventful night when her frothy petticoat of real Valenciennes got torn by a boathook in the search for the missing man. She wishes, however, that

she could type, so as to help Colonel Stuart with his nature notes. She grows cross round their wattle hut, but the soil is wrong for radishes. She knows that being on the high seas makes it difficult for Gordon McTavish, rising young doctor and potholer, whom she met again through a laundry parcel after the job in the beauty salon, to write to her, but seeing the badgers at play she longs for babies of her own. Suddenly a postman beats through the thicket holding an envelope post-marked Southampton. Wiping her trembling fingers on simply-cut jeans Jasmyne tears it open.

Next Week: The Happy Haven

get into coloured magazines, and people reading the magazines think they want cottages too and thus the myth spreads.

So when someone like myself, with experience of country cottages, buys a dull little brick house where they can at least keep warm and see what they are doing, they are a little self-conscious about it.

Perhaps the snobbery is rooted in the need for creative activity. Given a cottage as raw material you can pull it about until it is what is known as

converted. But a small modern house cannot be converted.

On the other hand it's far more of a challenge to turn a plumb ordinary house like ours into a charming home, fit for a coloured magazine, than it is to do this with a Tudor gem that presents you with half the ingredients for success before you have even started to wonder where on earth to hang the corn-dolly.

And one more point. Just because they are not cottages brick houses are dirt cheap.

— I. K. WORMAN

First Things First

AN article headed Spring Cleaning Says a woman should start with her looks,

A day here and there

On skin, nails and hair,

A pose with a head-load of books.

I'll polish the bumps off my elbows,

I'll massage the crow's feet away;

The Cleaning that's Spring?

I shan't touch a thing

Till the Autumn I'm keeping at bay.

— CAROLE PAINE

Dear Sarah Bernhardt . . .

DEAR, divine Sarah, do you realize that it is a hundred years since you entered the theatre? Do you realize that this is your centenary? Or do you, in your celestial green-room, on your heavenly stage, choose to forget the passing of our years? I imagine you forget. For women always forget, especially after the age of twenty-nine. And even now I know you are still the essence of the feminine.

Dear Sarah, you were indeed all women in one. *La donna è mobile*: yes, you were fickle. Look at your weathercock moods. Look at your score of lovers. Look at the endless trail of harassed dramatists, of stricken managers and perplexed administrators you gaily left behind you. You were a *femme fatale* from your tousled head to your charmingly shod feet.

Do you remember how you had your carriage sprayed with your favourite verberna when you condescended to travel by train? You even had your theatre washed over with benjoin. Do you remember your constant passion for flowers: for roses and, most French, most Second Empire of flowers, for Parma violets? Do you remember your love of animals: not a spinsterish passion for wire-haired terriers but a Bernhardt passion for tigers and chameleons? Do you remember how, on a feminine impulse, you dashed off your resignation to the Comédie Française? Do you remember your whirlwind romance and your lightning marriage (you wore "a very long and handsome sealskin cloak, close-fitting and trimmed with fur")? And, since Hell had no

fury like Sarah Bernhardt scorned, do you recall how, when an actress libelled you, you promptly laid a horsewhip across her face? Your extravagance, your love of admiration, your palatial yet domestic nature (you bathed in champagne, and mixed the salad every day): yes, you were feminine in everything. And, like Cleopatra, like all true women, you were always defiantly young.

And so, perhaps, Madame Sarah, you will not mind after all if I mention your

centenary. You can never conceivably be a hundred years old. No doubt in spirit you are *au fait* with Anouilh and Ionesco (as you are, of course, with Balmain and Balenciaga). No doubt you blithely watched *Les Amants* in wide-screen VistaVision; you were ethereally present at the Renaud-Barrault revival. No doubt you are interested in Miss Delaney, and have already read *Un Soupçon de Miel*. And, since you are incorrigibly, delightfully feminine, no doubt you are even now deciphering these pages (with occasional assistance from a dictionary).

— JOANNA RICHARDSON



"Madam is not at home, nor am I."

Motor If You Must

By J. B. BOOTHROYD



5 Signs and Surfaces

If the call of the road still calls — keep on reading

A **S**PLENDID feature of the British motor industry is its selfless dedication in producing cars capable of 100 m.p.h. in a country where they haven't a dog's chance of reaching it. This is an example of that craftsmanship for craftsmanship's sake which captious survivors from the nineteenth century claim to have seen the last of in their early childhood. It is true that we now have eight mouth-watering miles of motorway in Lancashire. But even the keenest 100 m.p.h. man, unless he is lucky enough to be garaged in those parts, can't often get up there to enjoy it. If he is based on London, for instance, his 4'88 minutes on the motorway (assuming a flying start and no illicit invalid carriages on the crown of the road) can only be savoured after a seven-hour north-west passage beginning on such notoriously sluggish trunk roads as A1, A5 and A6, touching on the industrial delights of

Newcastle-under-Lyme, and reaching his goal at dusk and down to a spoonful of petrol. And afterwards he has to come back.*

You will find, as a motorist, that obstacles to your progress on the roads fall roughly into three main sections:

(1) The 8,000,000 other motorists on them.

(2) Their being permanently under repair.

(3) Signs, warnings and threats. There is also a large miscellaneous category, but this is so vast and so variable that I shall dismiss it with no more than a glancing reference to brewers' drays wedged sideways in old-world village High Streets and moving back and forth on a fixed arc; to arguments between two van-drivers about who shall back up and make way for an articulated truck carrying a ship's boiler; to police who demand your documents but won't say why; and to dog-fights, hunts, local carnival processions and closed level-crossing gates whose attendant has forgotten to return from lunch. It is worth remembering, however, that many days of leisurely, carefree motoring can go by without an encounter with these or related hazards. The pleasure motorist, out for a Sunday

afternoon's spin with no ultimate destination in view but his own front gate, is seldom inconvenienced. It is on the urgent journey with an inflexible deadline that you turn an innocent-looking corner and find yourself held up for forty minutes while the ancient custom of Trabbling the Quimboom runs its traditional course, and this is a time when you must take a firm grip on yourself. Remember that it is not merely a matter of being immobilized while the whole village queues up to put rhubarb through the oldest inhabitant's letter-box; you will also be expected to subscribe five shillings.

To deal first, then, with the other 8,000,000. The sooner you can accept them as a part of your new life the better. They represent a dream shattered, of course, but it is only one of many. Although in your heart you had hoped occasionally to see ahead of you an unoccupied stretch of road, you must have known that this can happen only in remote rural areas at about the hour of four in the morning—and even then there is a good chance of milk lorries doing 55 m.p.h. through a Halt sign without audible warning of approach. No, the roads of Britain are free. The other 8,000,000 motorists have as much right to them as you have. If the whole lot of them give the impression that they have even more right—as they will—you must accept that too. There is nothing like motoring to bring out the mettle in a man, and in time you will get the hang of it. You, too, will learn that the right of way belongs to the man who keeps going, whatever it may say in the Highway Code. Perhaps there is no finer test of character than the situation in which you find yourself converging on the junction of two fork roads with the identical speed and determination of a fellow-motorist. One must yield.



HOSPITAL
QUIET
PLEASE



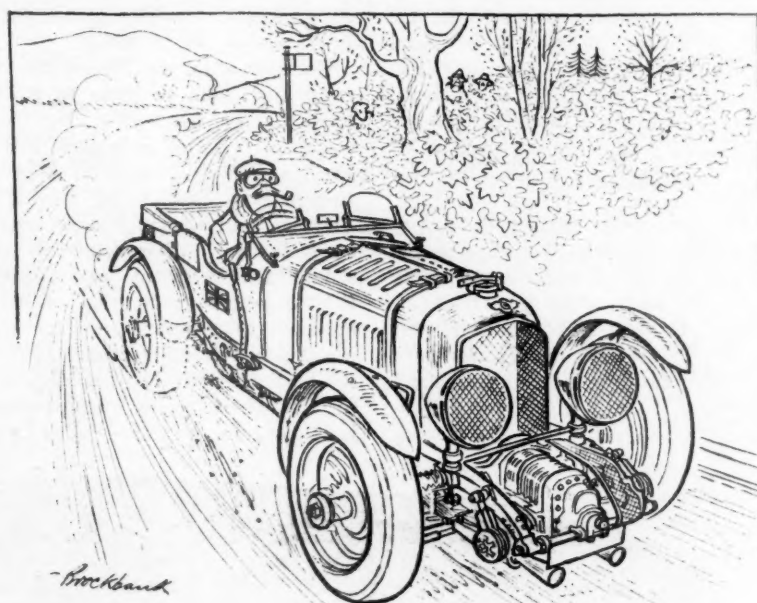
Blackbank

Which? Shall it be you? Never! Drive on! Watch and pray! Once you have held firm in a battle of giants such as this, even to the simultaneous howl of brakes, the rocking standstill with hub-caps in martial clash, the windows down as one, the invective fiercely exchanged, you may consider yourself blooded at last. If not actually bleeding.

Teachers of mathematics who can afford motor-cars derive pleasure from studying the incidence of the other 8,000,000 in the course of an average journey. It enables them to set more interesting sums than you and I used to get in the days of mere railway trains and men trying to fill a tank with a hole in it.* They report that the distribution of fellow road-users follows a consistent but complex pattern, one feature of which is that if motorist A is making a long, unsuccessful attempt to overtake motorist B, any stretch of road in which this would otherwise be possible always has motorist C, at the point of maximum awkwardness, approaching from the opposite direction. Maths men with a gambler's streak have for some time been trying to perfect a "system," which could be reduced to handy reference form for sticking on the near-side window; it would classify, by bends, unsighting switchbacks, hidden intersections, untamed hedges, etc., types of road where the calculations of motorist C, calculate he never so wisely, could be pleasurably thrown out. Nothing completely reliable has emerged so far, but you often see a driver who thinks it has . . . if you can spot him in your wing-mirror before he passes you with a hair's breadth to spare, at exactly the same moment as the oncoming C, usually an eight-wheeler with double trailer.

Let us pull into the side for a moment after those two somewhat excitable paragraphs and consider the state of British roads. This, by tradition, is up. No one knows why, unless it is a simple matter of keeping unemployment figures down. Continental motorists, finding repair work in progress between, say, Rome and Naples, are amazed and write to the papers about it: the smoke of Cassino had scarcely cleared before the Italians were asking what the hold-up

*If you think your tank has a hole in it consult a professional mechanic, who will say "What sort of m.p.g. do you expect to get with an old heap like this?"



was. No one has ever seen a canvas hut and a brazier at any point between Nice and Monte Carlo on any of the three *corniches*; if they did they'd drive through it. In Holland there would be rioting outside the Peace Palace at The Hague if news was brought that you couldn't get into Amsterdam for tar-sprayers. But in Britain it is different. It is for this reason that British readers are so intensely sympathetic to the military driver blockaded at zonal frontiers in Germany for five days; they know how he feels; it's happening to them all the time.

You will find, however, that it is not the delay that hurts; nor the rich patina of tarred flints on your newly-polished

coachwork; it isn't even the spine-crunching bump as you descend abruptly into what seems to be the shallow end of a swimming-bath. What really cracks the nerves, and often the radiator-grille, is the inscrutable behaviour of old men in mud-thick trousers who have been given a red flag and told to make the rough places plain. They are clearly beginners at the work, and are not learning fast, though you may with luck find one who has grasped the principle that units of single-lane traffic, progressing in opposite directions, tend to get into difficulties if waved on simultaneously. The best sort of red-flag man is the one who has given the whole thing up as hopeless and gone into a hut to make tea; the worst is the one

who has been given a green flag as well; with such riches of equipment he feels that there is bound to be some way of applying it. The result is bizarre in a frustrating sort of way. It is said that an ex-R.N. Signals Officer, held up at roadworks just outside Eastbourne, made notes of the flagwork during his prolonged wait and swore afterwards that he had received an interesting message; it was corrupt here and there, but seemed to be something about wanting more wages.

To do them justice, those responsible for keeping Britain's roads up are not mean with their signboards. Ministry of Transport statistics show, indeed, that for every ordinary road-sign of the Hump Bridge, Steep Hill or Road Narrows sort there are eleven and a half saying Road Works Ahead, and variants. There would have been twelve, but some fool took a red-flag man at his flag, so to speak, and knocked half of it down.

Do not get the idea that the size or garishness of a Road Works warning is in any way related to the extent of the operation itself when you reach it. Sometimes you think you never will reach it and it turns out that you have passed it; the huge, brilliant, scarlet and menacing board, which seemed to herald fearful perils, actually marked

the site of a simple drain-clearance and the gang responsible is by this time sleeping on a nearby grassy bank, his sandwich-paper fluttering beside him. On the other hand, an old, tar-stained board, half-hidden in the hedge and scarcely catching the eye at all, may mean that rounding the next bend will plunge you up to the axles in the beginning of four miles of liquid cement, flanked by so much equipment that it looks like the Biggest Show on Earth just before the big top goes up.

All this is a reminder, as a motorist, not to take anybody's word for anything. Make your own decisions on a shrewd assessment of prevailing conditions, always keeping a ten shilling note handy in case anyone turns nasty.

Road-signs proper (Hump Bridge, etc., which shall be taken to include Road Greasy When Wet, No Overtaking on This Hill, It Is Forbidden to Feed the Ponies, Road Liable to Flood, Engage Low Gear, Mind Your Own Business, and hundreds more, as the stamp-dealers' advertisements say) should not be taken too seriously. B.M.A. records show that of every hundred psychiatrists' couches now installed in this country, seventy-eight are kept permanently warm by over-conscientious motorists who have been jerking obediently from *School to Cattle*

Crossing to Aircraft Taking Off to Low Bridge to Dual Carriageway Ends to Buses in Centre of Road to Accident Black Spot to Dead Slow to Halt and finally to Harley Street. Their motoring has been by fits and starts. They've started, seen a sign, had a fit, stalled, stopped, started again, seen a sign . . . This is no good.

The rule generally adopted in the matter of road-signs is to ignore them, unless they have the police behind them, figuratively or otherwise. Such signs as *Beware of Landslides* can be ignored anyway. Even a policeman would be hard put to it to lay down any alternative procedure. It is perhaps worth while to mention, in conclusion, that such private signs as EGGS, TEAS, DAY-OLD CHICKS and (now making a comeback) RABBITS, should be taken more seriously. The man in the car ahead is apt to be tapped on the arm by his wife, suddenly deciding that she wants an egg, day-old chick, tea or rabbit, and he then steps on all brakes and goes into reverse. If you are fairly close up at the time and not, as it happens, looking out for CUT FLOWERS, this can be inconvenient. The only consolation is that you'll get all the cut flowers you can take during your three weeks in the HOSPITAL (NO HOOTING).

Next week:

Some Passenger Problems





Thanks for the Surplus

IN the overwhelming avalanche of statistics which normally opens the way for the Budget, one figure stands out clear and hopeful: it is last year's surplus in Britain's payments with the outside world. It amounted to no less than £455,000,000. This is a record. In private conversation and not for quotation or attribution, a very high official who delves into these matters has recently called it "the surplus of the century," implying that it is too good to last and unlikely to

be repeated.

The first question is: What caused this magnificent achievement? It is the product of many circumstances. One of them is unquestionably the good effect of the harsh measures taken in September 1957 to hold back the forces of inflation. They helped to keep down costs and prices, and gave manufacturers in Britain a new incentive to find outlets abroad for their products. The other highly favourable factor from which we benefited last year was the relatively low level of import prices. The "terms of trade," as the economists call them, have moved massively in our favour.

The immediate deduction to be made from this surplus is that with this margin of safety on the right side of the balance of payments the Chancellor of the Exchequer could afford to be something of a dare-devil of expansion in the proposals made yesterday, though admittedly the extent of his dare-devilry will not please everybody.

Where has this surplus gone? Some of it is tucked safely in the coffers that hold the gold and foreign currency reserve. This rose by £284,000,000 last year. The rest was invested overseas or used to repay overseas debt.

The next question is: Who earned this surplus? It was secured almost entirely through "invisible" transactions. Broadly speaking, this is how the balance of payments accounts closed. In our merchandise trade with the rest of the world we had a surplus last year of £120,000,000. This, incidentally, is the first time Britain has had such a trade surplus since the compilation of trade statistics began. That surplus

was more than swallowed up by a £216,000,000 deficit on Government overseas expenditure. Such little matters as Cyprus, the maintenance of troops in Europe, military and naval establishments overseas, not to speak of embassies, have to be paid for.

The over-all surplus of £455,000,000 was thus due by the remaining items in the balance of payments, the invisibles which brought in a fantastic net £551,000,000. They are an extraordinarily mixed bag. They come from shipping, dividends on our overseas investments, the earnings of banks, insurance companies and merchanting firms, the overseas operations of oil companies, and also the tourists (though this is an item which now weighs with almost equal force on each side of the account).



For Export Only

NOTHING less than £100m. is spent annually in this country advertising soap, including detergents, compared with the £7m. allocated to the Arts—including grants to museums and art galleries.

But it's not only in the towns that we suffer from this morbid concern with hygiene. The same disease is rampant and rife in the country too. Some of its consequences are becoming nothing less than hilarious.

I keep a dairy herd. Naturally, it's terribly tuberculin-tested. Indeed I think I spent more money on the concrete-and-chromium milk parlour than on buying the wretched cows. And I am sure my cowmen devote more time to scrubbing udders and sterilizing churns than they do to milking or filling them. That our pure untouched-by-human-hands milk is, when collected, then mixed with my neighbour's who still claws at his cows' teats with unwashed hands, etc., is of no great consequence. Eventually, he'll have to go the way of all of us and decide either to keep cows or keep soap.

But what is so damned silly is that the entire village here is having to drink condensed milk. The same anomaly exists somewhere in every dairy district in the country. Here we are with about four cows per capita and even the brats

And so when we doff our hat to the Chancellor for the small mercies of his Budget or contemplate the high standard of living enjoyed in these small islands, let us give homage to the invisibles from whom these blessings flow. And since invisibles are unexciting, impersonal affairs, let us give them a few random personifications. They come from the great giants of the oil world, Shell and B.P., the big joint stock banks, the Midland, Barclays and the rest, the overseas banks such as Barclays D.C.O. and the Bank of London and South America, the big insurance companies, not forgetting the Pru and the Pearl, the great mining groups of the City, such as the Union Corporation, the great merchanting houses such as Harrisons and Crosfield. To all of them we owe our thanks.

— LOMBARD LANE

at the local school can't get fresh milk, but take the canned product of Switzerland.

It's not that we farmers won't sell a few gallons to our neighbours. We are not allowed to do so. I used to supply my tenants. Each would leave a can by the bail and collect it after milking. But that is no longer permissible—unless one has a *retail licence*. To obtain one of these things now entails more soap, too much soap. It means bottles, sterilizing equipment, sealing gadgets, and the trot of perambulating inspectors.

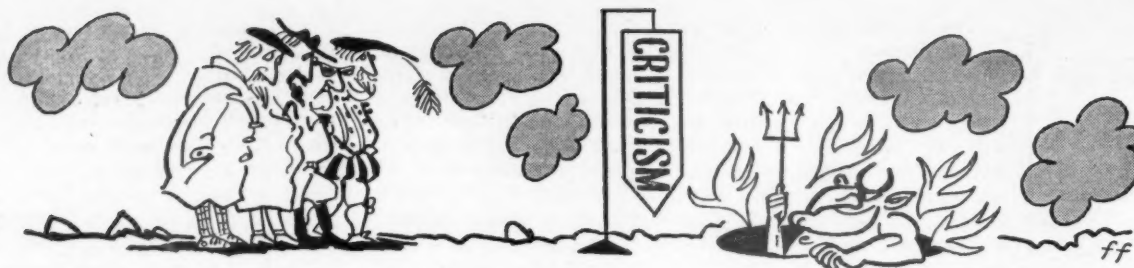
We have to draw the line somewhere. As far as I care, the village will have to take to rum, and the children can drink detergents.

— RONALD DUNCAN

Sitting Tenants

OUR familial habitation—
Which is all dilapidation—
Full of crannies, nooks and hollows
In its roof and eaves and beams—
Is a godsend to the swallows,
To the starlings, swifts and sparrows,
For it suits nidification
To the summit of their dreams.
Add wisteria, jasmine, ivy,
And they're positively jivey
With a springtime effervescence
That derides our home's senescence;
So that while we cringe and cower
At a sign of gust or shower,
They continue their rejoining,
And their plastering and anointing—
An example to the owners,
Who considered us as Jonahs,
And wrote off the house, because so
Unremunerative on lease—
But it's wizzo for our *oiseaux*,
Who are safe from Rate Increase.

— R. A. PIDDINGTON



BOOKING OFFICE

Whither SF?

A Case of Conscience. James Blish. *Faber*, 15/-.

Count-Down. Charles Eric Maine. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 12/6

Chain Reaction. Christopher Hodder-Williams. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 15/-

IT may or may not be true that life imitates art, but it is certainly true that life imitates science-fiction. Ten years ago the earth-satellites, the moon-rockets, the space-travel, and all that delicious chatter about "free fall" and "blasting-off" and so on, belonged to the world of science-fiction. Now life has caught up with it, rockets are dispatched to, or anyway near, the moon, captains in the U.S. Air Force are medically prepared for space flight; news is trespassing into science-fiction's domain. Long ago the SF writer was deprived of his Bug-eyed Monsters and compelled to use jargon that bore at least a superficial patina of conviction to the student of physics. No one could get away to-day with the formula which Mr. Murray Leinster offered us in a paperback called *The Last Space-Ship* about seven years ago for finding the relationship of mass to velocity in an overdrive field: $M/y, yV=E-I$ quote—where y had to be raised to infinity but not cancelled out, a slight *bêtise* which to-day would be discovered as low as the fourth form.

What then is left to the science-fiction writers when their fiction has become fact? Here are three interesting solutions. *A Case of Conscience* is the most interesting. Father Ruiz-Sanchez, a Jesuit priest who accompanied an expedition to the planet Lithia as a biologist, made the alarming discovery that the nature of existence on that planet was such as to provide unarguable proof of the falsity of Catholic doctrine. The only possible conclusion to the Father was that the entire planet had been created by the Devil "to snap the chains that have held Peter's rock together all

these many centuries." But to believe the Devil capable of creation is to believe in the heresy of Manichæism. Mr. Blish, whose earlier SF stories gave no hint of such intellectual leanings, works out this plot with both mental and physical excitement. Some of his science, and all his quotations from *Finnegans Wake*, strike me as dubious; his theology may be equally dubious for all I know, but his story—not only science-fiction but philosophy-fiction—is wonderfully well told.

Count-Down tells how the seven members of a team engaged in testing a rocket with an anti-gravity drive suddenly begin to murder one another under an unearthly influence deriving from an odd piece of wreckage that appears unexpectedly on their island. Given a different background and different motivation, this is a story that might have been told by Agatha Christie, and it is interesting to see that Mr. Maine, who has previously gone in for woman stowaways in moon-rockets and sinister villains called Zakon, has

reverted to a *milieu* (as indeed he did in his last book) which is only one step removed from the real facts of to-day.

Finally, in *Chain Reaction* Mr. Hodder-Williams has given us a story which, though it cannot be classified as anything but science-fiction, involves the invention of nothing that is not to be matched in England at the present time. Some unaccountable cases of leukaemia and radiation-sickness lead to the discovery that certain batches of Spigett's Baked Beans are radioactive. From that point on the story becomes not a who-dun-it but a what-dun-it. Was it the beans themselves that were contaminated? or the sauce? or the tins? or the lining of the tins? All the resources of the Atomic Development Commission are called in to trace the intrusive radiation to its source, and a highly stimulating investigation it proves, though the conventional romantic subplot is a bore.

What next? It seems certain that the good SF writers are no longer concerned with inventing fresh scientific wonders; they are more interested in the impact of those wonders on the human spirit. Except in such still dubious spheres as ESP and telekinesis (the basis, mispronounced, of the latest Quatermass adventure) too much is known to too many for the pure inventors to have much of a run any more. But the sociologists are on a good wicket. At any moment we may be getting the SF story of the calibre of *Gaudy Night*. I shall be waiting avidly.

— B. A. YOUNG

POETS' CORNER



5. ROBERT FROST

NEW FICTION

Memento Mori. Muriel Spark. *Macmillan*, 15/-

Beard the Lion. William Manchester. *Cassell*, 15/-

The Other Side of the Coin. Pierre Boulle. *Secker and Warburg*, 13/6

A House in the Uplands. Erskine Caldwell. *Heinemann*, 13/6

As in Enid Bagnold's *The Loved and Envied*, the accent in *Memento Mori* is on age: there are a "pioneer penal reformer" (79), her still libidinous

brother (86), his lady-novelist wife (85), an amateur gerontologist (80), and a blackmailing housekeeper (73); at a lower end of the social scale are the inmates of an old ladies' hospital ward, including the lady-novelist's former maid who was once the gerontologist's mistress. Their relationships, both past and present, though extremely complicated, are made easy to understand by Miss Spark's lucid and fast-moving style; the device of linking disparate elements by a series of anonymous telephone-calls apparently emanating from Death himself seems, however, to imply symbolical values out of keeping with the strict realism of behaviour and dialogue. From many extremely funny scenes one might recommend the telegram sent by a veteran poet to a contemporary with whom he disagrees about Dowson, and the reactions of the hospital "Grannies" to an invasion of really geriatric cases.

No reader could complain of a lack of action in *Beard the Lion*, which is written evidently with the wide screen in view. A myopic American pharmacologist, entrusted with a mysterious sealed packet by an obese Egyptian resembling King Farouk, plus an enormous trunk which proves to contain a stowaway, is besieged on an ocean liner by assorted eccentrics, obviously after the packet and including a raffish female relic of the 'thirties, an Englishman wearing bifocals, a wing-collar and two gold front teeth, and an Arab terrorist with acne and a Colt '45. Highlights of the voyage include being locked in the ship's Turkish bath at 380 degrees of heat, heaving a 250-lb. corpse through a porthole, and swimming ashore to England; where the fleeing pharmacologist is hunted for murder, welcomed at the House of Lords by the Earl of Jodhpur, and flown to Cairo disguised as a hospital patient encased in plaster. When he is caught by the monsoon and, later, in a clash between Arabs and Israelis, the piling-on of incident reaches a cumulative peak of absurdity which even the occasional excellence of the writing cannot reduce.

The author of *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, having created a convincing English colonel, now tries his hand at an American woman and with a fair degree of success, though the characters in *The Other Side of the Coin*—and Patricia herself—are perhaps too fond of proclaiming her nationality as if it were a talisman, or an excuse for almost any excessive form of behaviour. Patricia is the wife of a French plantation manager in Malaya, and the story turns ironically upon her indefatigable efforts to tame and civilize a young Chinese girl-terrorist, with unfortunate results all round. Sympathetically, also, are presented the other terrorists, subjected in their hill camp "to a heavy programme of study," including daily lessons in Mandarin Chinese. The publishers are perhaps right in comparing Patricia with Graham

Greene's *Quiet American*: certainly her "do-gooding" is as ill-rewarded as his. Richard Howard is to be congratulated on a translation which captures successfully the laconic and easily-readable quality of the original.

How does Caldwell get away with it? Is he really having the public on, in *A House in the Uplands*, with a private and vastly profitable joke, or are such characters as Grady Dunbar—one of the blood Dunbars—and his neglected "child-bride" Lucyanne intended to be taken seriously? The husband is a bully and coward who throws empty bourbon bottles from his bedroom window for the negroes below to lick, sleeps for preference with a quadroon maid, and ceaselessly maltreats his wife, who, however, is such a fool that it takes her until page 110 before she realizes how ruthless and cruel he is. Yet Grady commands instant obedience in an impossibly feudal manner and Lucyanne's plight is supposed to arouse the reader's sympathy. The reason for this author's enormous popularity remains an enigma which the reissue of this crude and highly-coloured melodrama—so clumsily written in places that it might have been dictated to a tape-recorder—will do nothing to solve.

— J. MACLAREN-ROSS

Other New Books

Homer and the Æther. John Cowper Powys. Macdonald, 16/-

This is a summary of the *Iliad* and in parts a straight translation. Mr. Powys is apparently aiming at the younger reader, although the odd sexual detail is not shirked, and he has produced a brisk narrative, staying fairly close to the original, with some stretches of extensive cutting and condensation. Bits of slightly old-fashioned slang proclaim emancipation from the honey-laden cadences of the Victorian translators rather than make contact with Youth, though the surge of the story should do that. I should have thought that beginners would need rather more help than the author gives them: can a grasp of the general pattern of Greek religion be taken for granted to-day?

This odd but useful enterprise is slightly complicated by the fancy that Æther, who inspired Homer, is explaining what the poet is up to. Luckily, after a vague and exclamatory opening that claims for Homer anything that has ever been claimed for any poet, Æther fades out and makes only sporadic reappearances.

— R. G. G. P.

A Truce to Obedience. Charles Jacobs. Collins, 15/-

"When the first community of fishermen had decided to settle at Pescario their plight was not so desperate as to forget the need for a piazza." The piazza is the main setting (one might say *stage*, for how well the book could be adapted for big or little screens) of Mr. Jacobs' dramatic novel of Italian village life.

Here is the *trattoria* where the hero, Emilio (worker in the local town's surveyor's office), lodges gloomily until other lodgers (a woman and her illegitimate child) arrive. Vicariously, he hero-worships the child's father, models himself on a man he has never seen and stirs the villagers to fight for the finishing of the block of modern flats on the piazza. The story is interesting, amusing and exciting. The characters live and strut and idle—"for it was no disgrace in Pescario to be without work, to have no prospects, to sit all day in the sun." For lovers of Italy the smell of printing ink will give way to the sharp scents of wine, mingled with the reek of the *trattoria*. They will hear the slap of washing on the slabs by the lake, see the pink wash of houses and the ochre-coloured water.

— B. E. B.

CREDIT BALANCE

Protest. Ed. Gene Feldman and Max Gartenberg. *Souvenir Press*, 25/-. An anthology of the works of the Beat Generation and the Angry Young Men, with some peripheral criticism. A useful collection, if only to ward off the labour of having to read *On the Road* right through or make another visit to *Look Back in Anger*. Worth having for Ginsberg's *Howl* alone.

AT THE PLAY

Les Fourberies de Scapin (PRINCES)

Fool's Paradise (APOLLO)

IN the final week of its season the Comédie Française returned to farce with Molière's *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, which we saw a few weeks ago done bravely but inadequately by an English company at Hammersmith, in Otway's version.

It depends largely on the quality of the Scapin, the mischievous valet whose intrigues turn his masters' lives inside out; he must dominate the play, he must be clown, acrobat, ballet-dancer and relentless droll. Here Robert Hirsch was all these, and more, a consummate comedian with a full armoury of tricks. If, on reflection, the ruses Scapin employs to deceive two very simple-minded old gentlemen are rather easy, M. Hirsch carried them off with so much bravura that they seemed subtler than they were. It was an astonishing performance, technically dazzling, but he worked so tremendously hard that my pleasure was tinged with anxiety, and I laughed more at Jacques Sereys' preposterous Geronte, one of the two miserly fathers on the trail of their spendthrift sons.

M. Sereys would make a marvellous Shallow, or indeed any of Shakespeare's palsied dotards. He has a long cavernous face, a trembling, toothless mouth and expressive eyes almost invisible under shaggy brows. His ragged Geronte, topped by an absurd straw hat, suffering agonies as Scapin terrified him into

parting with his gold, became highly sympathetic. In the big scene where Scapin frightens him into hiding in a bag and beats him up while pretending to fight off his aggressors, somehow he emerged with dignity; and when Zerbinette, one of the girls in the case, tells him unwittingly how Scapin has pulled the wool over his eyes, he sat crushed, only his mumbling lips and desperate eyes giving any clue to the monsoon of rage inside him. He is a little like Michael Hordern.

Zerbinette was played by Micheline Boudet, and in her scene with Geronte she had to be in stitches of laughter. I don't think I have ever heard such natural, prolonged and irresistible laughter on the stage. When at last one imagined she had guffawed herself to a standstill, she was off again, doubled up with the sheer pain of it. People may jeer at the training of the Comédie Française and call it pedantic, but nothing less gruelling could produce this kind of tour-de-force night after night.

Jacques Charon produced with loving attention to detail, and M. Hirsch designed the gay wharfside and the bright dresses. As a curtain-raiser we had an elegant trifle by de Musset, *Un Caprice*, about a worldly woman who took her friend's erring husband in hand and taught him a lesson. It was very stately, with the moves worked out as for a minuet, and it showed off this company's mastery of mannered comedy. Lise Delamare sailed through it magnificently, poised and charming, and

Bernard Dheran made an amusing figure of the defeated husband.

One needs a portable computer and a tame lawyer to keep one's bearings in the financial bog into which, in *Fool's Paradise*, Peter Coke's two heroines sink deeper and deeper. I soon abandoned any sense of geography, and it didn't matter at all, since the ladies were Cicely Courtneidge and Nora Swinburne, two irresponsible widows of one frivolous

REP SELECTION

Citizens', Glasgow, *Under the Light*, new play, unspecified run.
Playhouse, Salisbury, *A View from the Bridge*, until April 11th.
Theatre Royal, York, *Jane Eyre*, until April 11th.
Northampton Rep, *The Ghost Train*, until April 11th.

husband who has left them a house and no money in the hope that they will drive each other mad. In fact they get on very well; the only fly in their ointment is debt, and though the house is full of valuable furniture it is all in trust. A flash antique-dealer is after it who gives them a deposit on emeralds they believe to be faked and which he has never seen (this appeared highly improbable). Having got his foot in, he reappears frequently to make a scene. Loans begin to rain in on them embarrassingly; to get rid of the intruder they invent a third Mrs. Hayling, a wealthy Portuguese,

whom Miss Courtneidge impersonates in a long and riotous scene. Finally, just as they are packing up to go to prison, the emeralds are found to be genuine, and the curtain falls on a wild auction in their drawing-room.

This farce is pretty thin, but it moves quickly in Allan Davis's production and gives Miss Courtneidge plenty of rope. She is in her best form, driving it along with delicious extravagance; there is still no one on our stage to touch her at this kind of domestic burlesque. *Fool's Paradise* is worth seeing for her, for Miss Swinburne, winningly anxious as her fellow-conspirator, for Guy Deghy's bulbous boulder of a dealer, for Agnes Lauchlan, with radioactivity on the brain, and for a ripe little sketch by Eileen Draycott of a grumpy, devoted old housemaid.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Grass is Greener (St. Martin's—10/12/58), polished English comedy. *Valmouth* (Saville—8/10/58), Sandy Wilson's musical from Firbank. And in *Clown Jewels* (Victoria Palace—11/3/59), the Crazy Gang is back, undiminished.

—ERIC KEOWN

AT THE BALLET

Carmen Amaya and her Spanish Dancers (WESTMINSTER)

CARMEN AMAYA's long suit is showmanship and she certainly has something worth showing to a London audience after seven years' absence. Her presentation of (in the main) flamenco dancing smacks of the real thing—genuine Sevillian impromptu. Commanding a talented team of young dancers and musicians she deliberately puts them in the forefront of her programme and joins them for the two finales only. Her presence is electrifying; she stamps and turns, ejaculates and gesticulates in a tensely controlled frenzy.

When she takes the stage alone to dance an Andalusian fandango her swift and powerful movements and her flashing facial expression carry her to a crescendo of radiant vitality. Later, against the subtle musical background provided by guitarists Rene Heredia and Juan Antonio Aguero and flamenco singer Rafael Ortega, Miss Amaya demonstrates her wonderful mastery of intricate rhythms. She wears her feminine finery so handsomely that it is something of a descent to near banality to see her dressed in the fashion of a male flamenco dancer.

Miss Amaya has surrounded herself with a troupe which sparkles with starlight and is a delight to watch as its members perform exhilarating prodigies and improvisations in the confines of a small stage. The company has a highly remarkable solo guitarist in Jose Motos.



Scapin—ROBERT HIRSCH

Les Fourberies de Scapin

Whoever the nameless dress-designer may be, he or she contributes much to the programme's pleasures.

From an orchestra composed, I assume, of members of our own musicians' union, Angel Curras, the conductor, drew some extremely lively, flexible and rhythmical playing.

— C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE PICTURES

Tiger Bay

Al Capone

The Sound and the Fury

I SPOKE too soon in "Survey" last week; of the several new ones about to begin when I wrote, not *The Sound and the Fury* but *Tiger Bay* (Director: J. Lee Thompson) turned out to be the most notable. This, after a rather slow and unpromising start, develops into a brilliantly entertaining job, with a really staggering performance by the child Hayley Mills, daughter of one of the stars, John Mills. I'm not thinking specially of her big scene, which roused the audience to delighted, loud applause at the press show. This is certainly striking enough, as she acts out with passionate energy a violent quarrel between a man and a woman, culminating in a fatal pistol-shot, of which she was earlier (as we have seen) a fascinated witness. But she shows her quality at innumerable moments throughout the film in much less obvious, less spectacular ways: moments where one can—these things are deceptive, but I believe one very often can—recognize that what she is doing is the result of her own intelligence and intuition and acting ability and not of her simply following the instructions of the director.

Even so, the signs of excellent direction are plain enough, and the piece as a whole has very much more to offer than a twelve-year-old virtuosa. I don't think it should have been given a title that implies that Cardiff's *Tiger Bay* is its subject as well as its scene. The sharp-eyed may observe in the credits that the story is adapted (by John Hawkesworth and Shelley Smith) from something called *Rodolphe et le Revolver*—I wasn't sharp-eyed enough to notice who wrote that—and some title of that kind would suit it better. Hayley Mills is the child who pines for a toy gun so that the local boys will let her join in their shooting games; she happens to see a real gun used, she sees the murderer hide it, and she takes it.

But soon both the murderer and the police know where it is. He catches up with her first; they become friends, and he forgets his trouble for a time as he plays with her. She is assuming he will escape and take her with him "round the world," he is at least once tempted to kill her to save himself. Gradually the police close in—the effectiveness of laborious routine investigation is admirably shown—and the suspense mounts,

the speed increases, until the thoroughly satisfactory climax.

It may sound like a harsh and forbidding melodrama; but the threads of the plot are so cleverly interwoven, the detail and the small-part playing are so good, the suspense is so superbly managed, and above all the child's performance is so captivating (never a breath of sentimentality) that in fact the film is magnificent entertainment.

Not very much is wrong with *Al Capone* (Director: Richard Wilson) apart from the frequent use of off-screen narrative—and in a factual story of the nineteen-twenties needing a good deal of explanation for present-day audiences, that was perhaps inevitable. But it has a brilliant acting performance by Rod Steiger as the infamous Al, and the direction, of scenes on every scale from the inference-loaded duologue to the complicated group scene (with or without violence) is first-rate. I found it quite absorbing, even though I knew more or less what was going to happen all the time. It is often acidly amusing, and Mr. Steiger's portrait of Capone as he progresses, by way of planned murders, from cheap strong-arm man to fantastically rich boss (the tendency to explode into hysterical anger at any opposition growing continually with the increase of his power) is really something to see.

The Sound and the Fury (Director: Martin Ritt) has many good moments, and one or two episodes that are moving and compelling, but it is unsatisfactory as a whole. Most of the characters, bizarre as they may seem in a brief description (the domestic tyrant determined to restore the lost dignity of the family to which he does not belong, his weak drunkard stepbrother, his mute idiot stepbrother, his promiscuous sister and her illegitimate daughter who hates him), somehow give the impression of types—the oversize, highly-coloured types of many a decaying-South story. There is an irritatingly contrived ending to send the customers away happy, and there is too much background music; the piece is not worthy of the Faulkner name. But there are at least two impressive performances—Margaret Leighton's as the ravaged woman who comes back to see her daughter, and Yul Brynner's as the obsessed tyrant himself.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

An outstanding new one is a very funny Polish comedy, *Eve Wants to Sleep*; details next week. Of the others

PUNCH EXHIBITION

An exhibition of fifty years of *Punch* cinema cartoons and caricatures is on view at the Streatham Gaumont, by arrangement with the Rank Organization.



[Al Capone]

Al Capone—ROD STEIGER

in London, the Greek *A Matter of Dignity* (11/3/59) is still the most distinguished. *The Journey* (1/4/59) is well worth seeing. Probably you can still find *Room at the Top* (4/2/59) and *Carlton-Browne of the F.O.* (18/3/59), and certainly you can still find *Gigi* (18/2/59).

Not a very bright lot of releases. *Whirlpool* (1/4/59) is a pursuit melodrama with splendid Rhine scenery too often marred by people put in front of it, and *The Hanging Tree* (4/3/59) is an emotional Western with interesting mining-camp detail and strikingly rich colour.

— RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE GALLERY

Treasures of Cambridge

A JUNIOR member of a family which has for generations owned considerable treasures in the way of pictures once electrified an audience of cognoscenti, when they were exhibited in London, by saying "I had no idea all these belonged to us." On beholding the

array of this show (500 items) from the colleges of Cambridge and the Fitzwilliam Museum, under one roof at Goldsmith's Hall, and considering it as part of the national heritage, many spectators may feel something of the same surprise.

This is very much a "something for everyone" exhibition in which paintings, old masters and more recent, drawings (ditto), miniatures, manuscripts, poems, objects of gold and silver, jewellery and a few scientific instruments are some, only, of the components. The probability is that those who have come on some particular quest, perhaps to see Titian's "Rape of Lucrece" or Gainsborough's early porcelain-like "Heneage Lloyd and his Sister" in new surroundings—always an intriguing experience—may well find themselves lured into unaccustomed fields by the pocket-book of Francis Drake and contemporary maps marking the progress of the Armada in the English Channel; pondering over the poet Gray's writing, or Coleridge's; or enchanted by a pair of Greek earrings.

There are, in addition, Sieneze primitives, a Renoir landscape, and, among the first-rate drawings (Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Titian) appropriately some delightful Rowlandsons taking in King's Chapel. One visit is not enough and two barely adequate—a happy circumstance for the many whose daily round lies within a stone's-throw of Goldsmith's Hall.

Treasures of Cambridge, Goldsmith's Hall, Foster Lane, Cheapside, E.C.4 (closes April 18).

Recommended

"Twenty Miles Round Windsor," Drawings and Prints. J. Manley, 24 Thames Street, Windsor (closes April 18).

— ADRIAN DAINTRY

ON THE AIR

News and Views

LISTENING to a sports report one Saturday evening I noticed with fascination that even in a list of football results the announcer did not keep the histrionics out. "Bolton Wanderers"—the tone level but flushed with a hint of excitement—"three, Chelsea"—a deader note—"nought." Away wins were recorded with a subdued but virtuosic climax, but draws were even more interesting: the unexciting nature of the game was acknowledged by a level inflection but superimposed on this was an extraordinary brilliance of tone, as though the speaker could not keep out of his mind the idea that that particular draw must be for some of his listeners one of the money-spawning eight.

No harm in that. And anyone who is going to spend his days reading out snatches of information must, to do the job properly, be interested in what his voice sounds like. Probably he hankers



"Feeling jaded? Spirits down?
Crumbley Hall for half a crown,
Open now for all to view—
Crumbley Hall the treat for you."

after a poetry spot on the Third, mouth-ing great ohs and spitting cataracts of consonants, but there aren't many openings of that sort and meanwhile here are the Stock Exchange closing prices.

As far as facts are concerned the damage is only aesthetic, and that not much. It is a pity that the pontifical nature of the BBC makes announcers seem to be enjoying themselves most when they have really funereal tidings to spread, and to be embarrassed by gay little bits about children skipping through primrose-dappled boscage in the holiday sunshine. But much news nowadays is as doubtful as a tipster's cert, and often the official view of what the truth is may turn out to be mistaken. The BBC is, inevitably, on the side of authority, but has to pretend not to be. I thought that I could detect, over the last month, a distinct weakening in the conviction in announcers' voices as they recounted the latest developments in the unmasking of the Nyasaland plot. Nothing can be done about this, but it makes one uneasy when authority's sense of what the public will swallow is lagging some days behind one's own.

Of course the accent of the announcer is far less important than the selection of the editor, and here the BBC's supposed impartiality is a positive disadvantage. (Readers of the *Daily Telegraph* claim that its political bias is a help, as compared with the apparently impartial *Times*. The ball always comes with the same strong spin from the right, instead of moving less, but unpredictably, both ways.) Programmes of comment, such as "At Home and Abroad," have a double helping of this problem; on top of the BBC's impartiality they have the assumed lack of bias on the part of the expert who has been collared to tell us what is going on at Ankara. Seldom, if ever, have I heard a speaker introduced with "Colonel Candle has spent many years in the Near East; he believes that the oil interests are Semite-controlled, that the camel is a noble animal and that the Pan-Arab Republic is foretold by the Pyramids, but otherwise he is a distinguished

authority on the area." This lack of documentation is particularly disastrous in the case of the Frenchmen who are always rung up for an explanation of the latest crisis; their accents are charming but their standpoint obscure, except that they believe that this is the end of civilization as we know it. English industrial disputants often produce the same effect, without the charm.

The accepted answer to this problem is the broadcast debate. This only really works when the facts are not in dispute, both debaters are skilled, and there is masses of time. There was a classic example of how a debate should not be broadcast at the height of the Nyasaland crisis in "At Home and Abroad." A spokesman for the Rhodesian settlers, being questioned by a member of the Africa Council, ventured after a few misty remarks a couple of direct assertions. He was immediately contradicted, but just before he could be got really on the run with a barrage of facts time was up, which made it seem as if the BBC had come to the rescue of the official speaker. If the skills of the disputants had been reversed the argument might have gone the other way, and even less good would have been done.

Finally there are the much more formal debates, such as are held by the Fifty-One Society. These are always more satisfying the less they are concerned with "real life." Perhaps this is a universal law of debating: you can only achieve a coherent and rational argument on a subject which admits very few facts and in which nobody can become emotionally involved. So not much can be done. And anyway we will no doubt all achieve before long the attitude of the lady who turns calmly towards her TV set of an evening and says "Shall we look at the News?"

— PETER DICKINSON

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PUNCH, April 8 1959

Sporting Prints

XIII STANLEY MATTHEWS



The Wages Game

By JOHN HUGHES

THE difficulty of training trade union officials arises partly from unwillingness to spend money merely on training people to do trade union work efficiently and partly because training must not cast people in too rigid a mould; for yesterday's "militant" trade union may become to-day's "responsible" one (and back again).

THE WAGES GAME is offered as a realistic training method that surmounts these obstacles. The rules are:

(1) The game is played in "rounds" or "years." The normal duration is ten "rounds," but it may be continued indefinitely as a test of endurance. Each player is given the title of a *trade section*.

(2) The game is played on a board with pawns which are called "members." If a snakes-and-ladders board is used the ladders may *only* be climbed by professional workers' trade sections (such as the B.M.A. and Atomic Scientists). The snakes are reserved for use by London busmen or any other section subsequently deserted by the T.U.C.

(3) Before each "round" lots are drawn to select three players who will each throw a die; this is known as a "strike." The number on the die represents the percentage wage increase.

(4) (a) If the same player is selected twice running to throw a "strike" he has to miss the next "round" as his section funds are exhausted.

(b) No player representing a "white collar" section who is selected to strike is allowed to do so. Instead a "Royal Commission" (or subsequently, a "Pay Research Unit" investigation) is declared, and the player misses that round and the following one.

(5) If any player not chosen by lot attempts to "strike," a Court of Inquiry is set up to judge his claim. The increase recommended must depend on the size of the trade section concerned.

(6) All players who wish to enjoy the same increase as one of the "strikers" must declare "Me Too." (This is known as a "comparability" claim.) Each "Me Too" claim has to be established to the satisfaction of a panel composed of the other players by proving some *unimportant* similarity between the player and the "striker" (e.g. size of shoes, colour of tie).

(7) In the event of disagreement about a "Me Too" claim the claim is referred to any non-player who happens to be around—preferably someone not interested in the game and ignorant of the rules. The "perpetrator," as this referee is called, does not need to be capable of reasoning, as no reasons are given for decisions. The decision is known as an "award," and is considered morally binding on the player, who should receive it reverently.

(8) Any player who does not receive a "Me Too" award, or who through inertia has not attempted to claim one, receives the increase indicated by COLIN. This is a machine that produces random numbers; its initials stand for

Cost of Living In Nowhere. It should not register changes in food prices or rent, although it should be very sensitive to the price of second-hand motor-cars.

(9) Before proceeding to the next "round," a player is selected to receive a forfeit. Recommended forfeits include:

General Secretary joins N.C.B. Miss a "round."

Employers fear nationalization. Receive double the increase.

Amalgamation with T.G.W.U. Retire from the game.

Drunk at Conference. Lose 2 per cent.

(10) All "striking" players and all others who have received the maximum increase for a "round" are issued with cards marked M (militant). All other players, including any that slept through a "round," receive cards marked R (responsible). At the end of the game a "perpetrator" selects one of two cards labelled "Socialism" and "Capitalism." If the "Socialism" card is selected all players holding more R cards than M cards are eliminated.

The players can now be ranked according to the wage increases secured. Suggested prizes (optional) are:

1st. Join the Board of I.C.I.

2nd. Receive, eventually, a two-column obituary in *The Times*.

3rd. Offer of a minor seat in the next Labour Cabinet.

The least successful player receives, of course, a peerage.



LANZ

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Reg'd at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Entered as 2nd-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y., P.O., 1903.

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES (including all Special and Extra Numbers and Postage):

Great Britain and Eire £2.10.0; Canada (by Canadian Magazine Post) £2.10.0 (\$7.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3.0.0 (U.S.A. \$9.00).

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